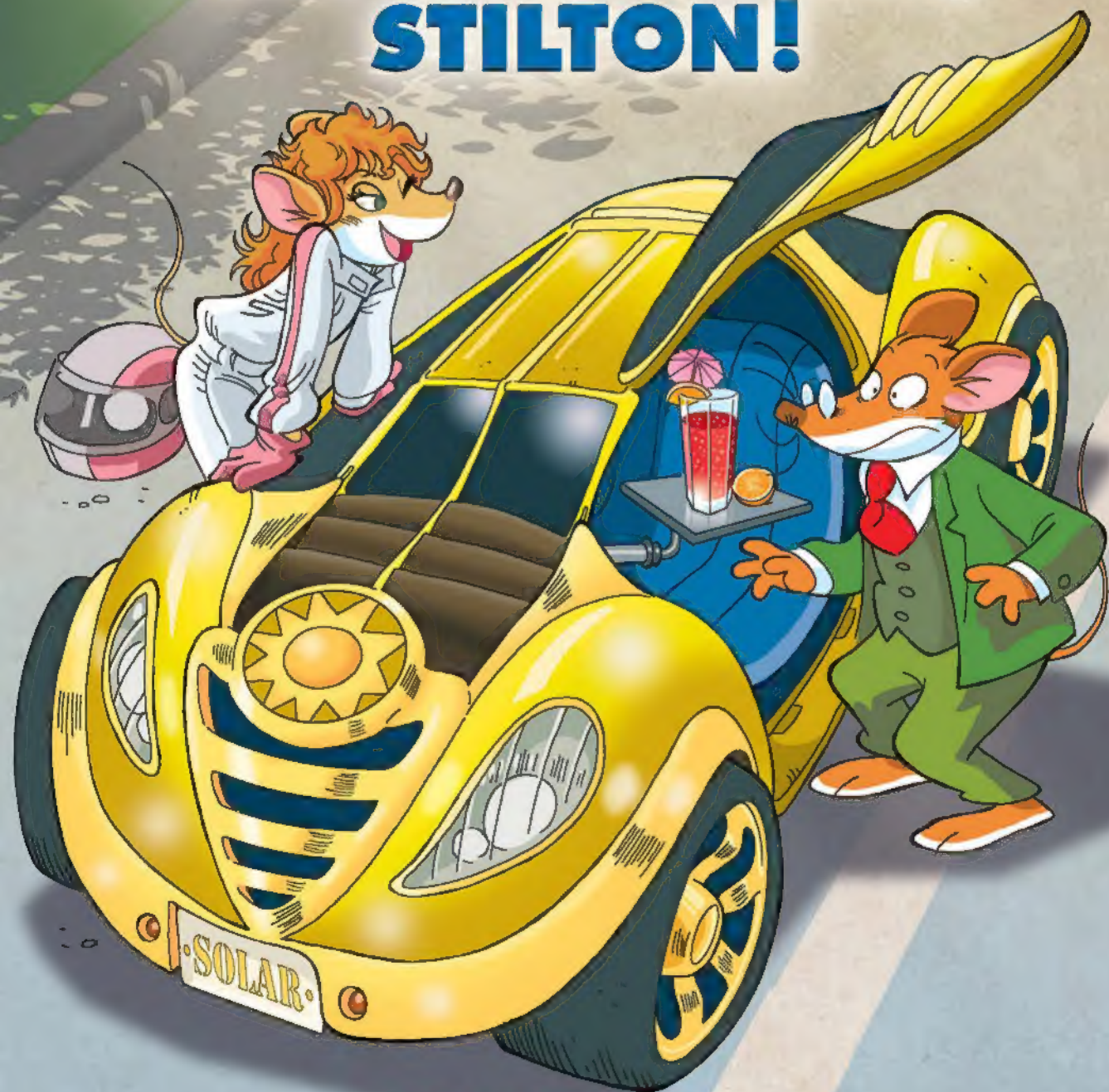




Geronimo Stilton

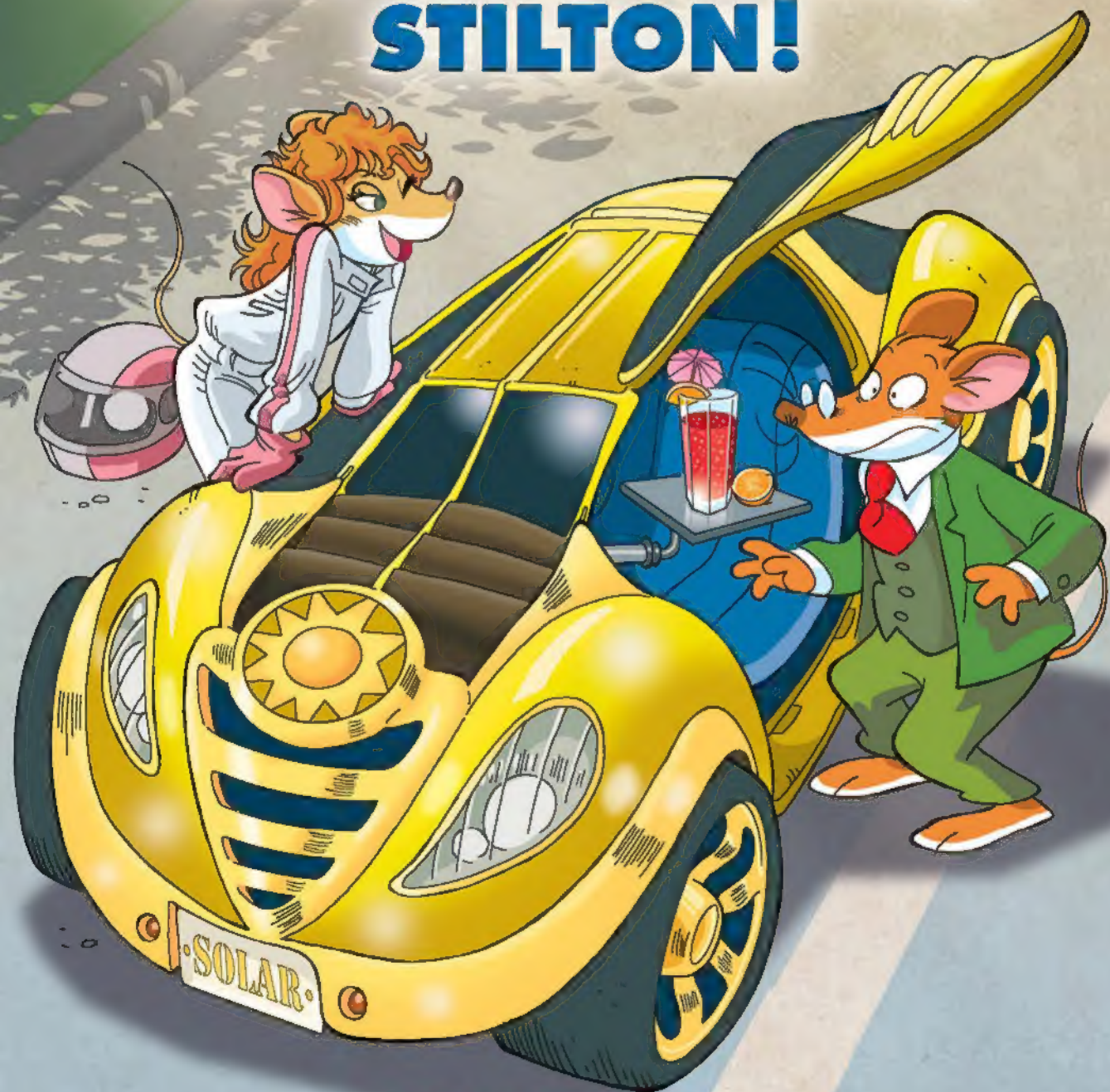
**GET INTO GEAR,
STILTON!**





Geronimo Stilton

**GET INTO GEAR,
STILTON!**



Dear mouse friends,
Welcome to the world of



Geronimo Stilton



THE RODENT'S GAZETTE
EDITORIAL STAFF





Geronimo Stilton

A learned and brainy
mouse; editor of
The Rodent's Gazette

Thea Stilton

Geronimo's sister and
special correspondent at
The Rodent's Gazette



Trap Stilton

An awful joker;
Geronimo's cousin and
owner of the store
Cheap Junk for Less

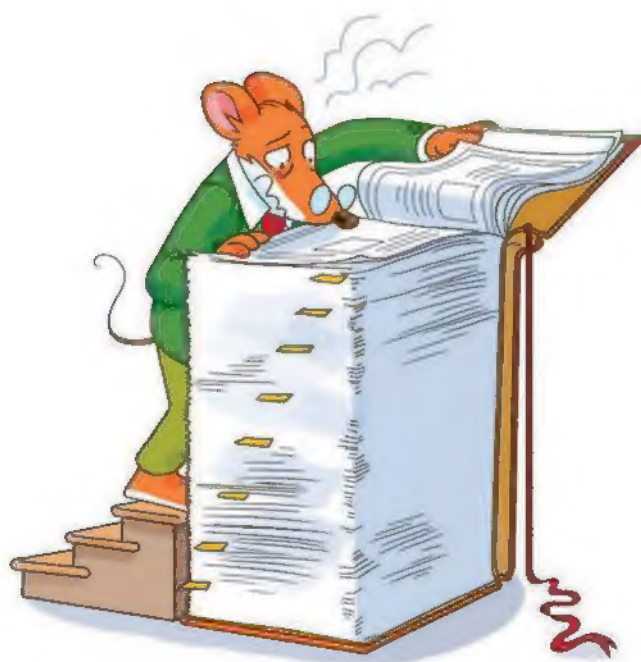
Benjamin Stilton

A sweet and loving
nine-year-old mouse;
Geronimo's favorite
nephew



Geronimo Stilton

**GET INTO GEAR,
STILTON!**



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eISBN 978-0-545-53937-1

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Based on an original idea by Elisabetta Dami.

www.geronimostilton.com

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Text by Geronimo Stilton

Original title *Ingrana la marcia, Stilton!*

Cover by Giuseppe Ferrario (design) and Giulia Zaffaroni (color)

Illustrations by Alessandro Muscillo (design) and

Christian Aliprandi (color)

Graphics by Chiara Cebraro

Special thanks to AnnMarie Anderson

Translated by Lidia Morson Tramontozzi

Interior design by Kay Petronio

First printing, July 2013

Thirty stories below New Mouse City in an undisclosed location, a very sophisticated robotic vehicle called Solar is stored in a secret laboratory. Solar is the only robot of its kind in the entire world. It can see, hear, and even talk! Solar will only allow one mouse to be its driver — the one and only Geronimo Stilton! Too bad Geronimo can barely drive and his driver's license has expired. Holey cheese! What's a gentlemouse to do? Turn the page to read the absolutely true story of Geronimo and Solar's first encounter and their top-secret mission.





A CHEERFUL SPRING MORNING

It was a cheerful **spring** morning in New Mouse City. The birds were singing, the air smelled **fresh** and **clean**, and it seemed as if everyone was **smiling** at me. I left my house **whistling** and headed toward my office at 17 Swiss Cheese Center.







Oh, I'm sorry! I forgot to introduce myself. My name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*. I'm the editor of *The Rodent's Gazette*, the most famous newspaper on Mouse Island.

On my way to work, I stopped at the newsstand and bought a copy of my favorite **MAGAZINE**, *The Collector of Cheeses*. Then I saw the **NEWSPAPER** headlines: Someone had **STOLEN** Duchess Catherine Rodenton's seventy-three-carat **diamond** necklace! Holey cheese!

I headed to my favorite **coffee shop** for breakfast. The owner, Flip Hotpaws,





served me my usual order of a cappuccino and a delicious **CHEESE-FILLED** pastry. After my breakfast, I passed the bookstore in **Singing Stone Square** and glanced in the window.

I was happy to see that the bookstore was featuring one of my bestselling books in the front window. An older rodent recognized me and asked for my *autograph*.

I'm a very shy mouse, and I flushed with **embarrassment**.

"What will your next **book** be about, Mr. Stilton?" she asked.





"I haven't decided yet," I told her.

After I signed her **BOOK**, I continued to my office.

I walked **SLOWLY** along the sidewalk, deep in thought. Who had **stolen** the **ENORMOUSE** diamond necklace? And what should my next book be about? Maybe I would write a **comedy** or a **Love STORY**. Or I could write a **mystery** about a jewel thief! With my head in the

For the love of bananas, watch out!

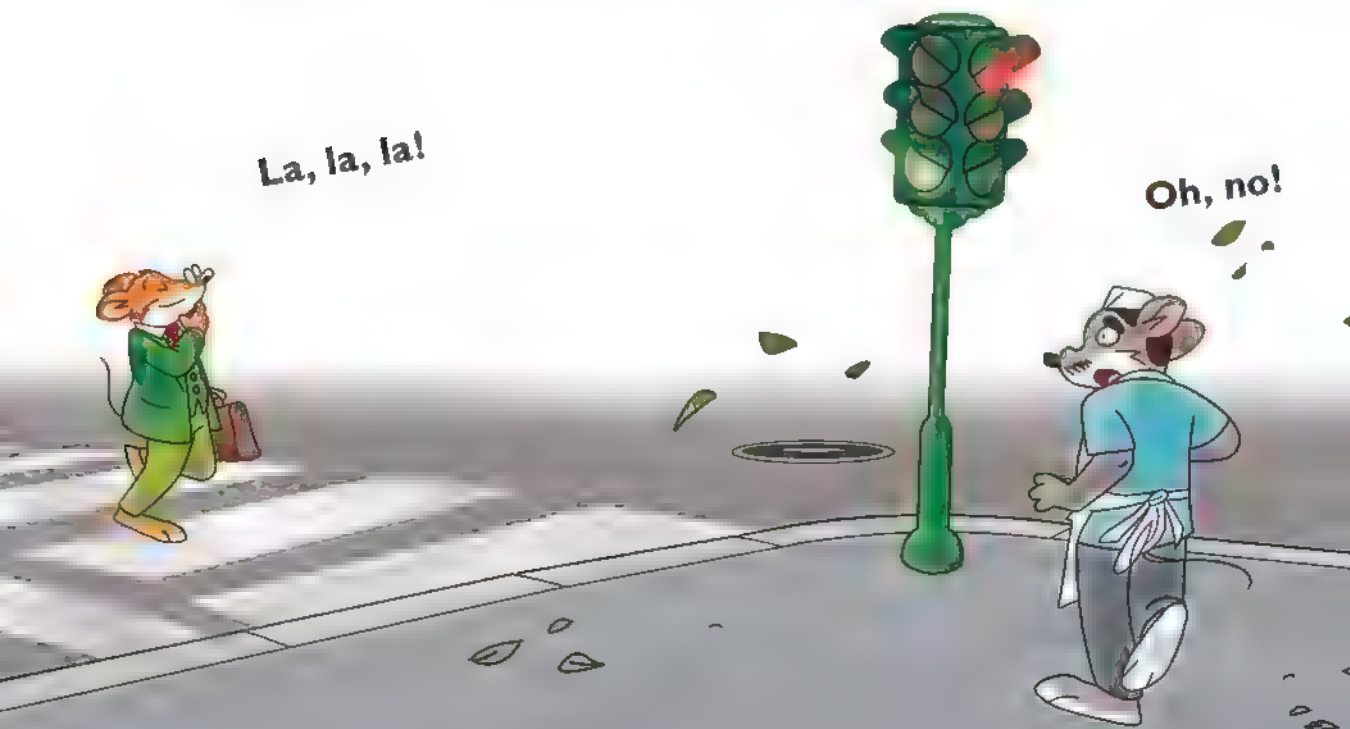




CLOUDS, I stepped off the curb to cross the street.

Suddenly, there was the **sound** of **SCREECHING** brakes. I spun quickly and saw that something **LARGE** and **YELLOW** was about to hit me.

I tried to jump out of the way, but it was too late. I flew **up, up, up** into the air and came **SMASHING** down to the ground in the middle of the street!





HOW ARE YOU, STILTON?

I looked up and saw the faces of five rodents **PEERING** down at me. I recognized the newsstand owner, **FLIP HOTPAWS**, and the older rodent from the bookstore. Everyone was **SHOUTING**.

“How are you feeling, Mr. Stilton?”





In the midst of all those voices, I thought I heard a **FAMILIAR** one. Where had I heard that before? Who could it be?

“How are you, my dear Stilton?” the voice **SQUEAKED**.

“Ahem, I think I’m still **alive** . . . or am I?” I replied.

I heard the wail of the ambulance **siren** growing louder and louder, and then I *fainted*.

When I came to, I saw nothing but **WHITE, WHITE, WHITE**. For a second, I was afraid I had died. Then I felt a huge **pain** in my tail, and I knew I was still alive!

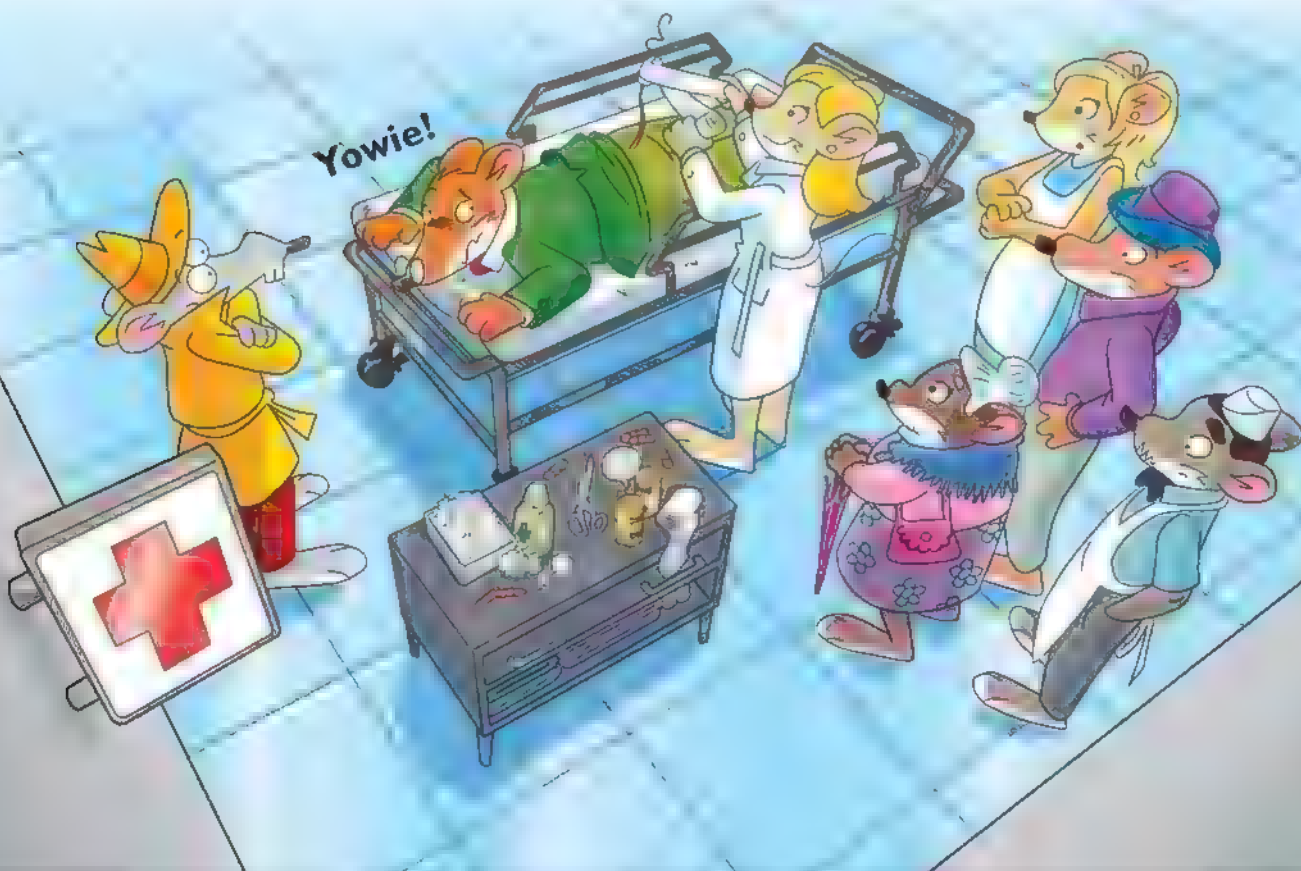
I was in a **hospital** surrounded by the rodents who had come to my aid. They all watched as the doctor wrapped my tail in a **bandage**.



“**Ouchie, ouchie, ouchie!**” I whimpered. “What happened?”

“You **broke** your tail, Mr. Stilton,” said a doctor. “You had an accident.”

“A-an **accident**?” I stammered. “Oh, yes, the **diamond** — I mean, the **newspaper** — that is, the **autograph**. What I meant to say is I remember now. I was about to cross the street when —”





Suddenly, I remembered everything.

“I was **HIT** by a car!” I shouted. “Who would do such a thing?”

“It was me, Stilton . . .” a familiar voice **SQUEAKED**.

I turned and saw my childhood friend **Hercule Poirat**.

“You did it?!” I exclaimed. “Why? Why, oh, why did you hit me?”

Hercule looked **ashamed**.

“Sorry, Stilton!” he apologized. “I tried to **stop**, but it was too **late**. I had a **green** light, and you were in the **middle** of the street.”

“You weren’t paying **attention**, Mr. Stilton,” the newsstand owner scolded me.

“That’s right,” Flip Hotpaws agreed. “You were **VEEEEERY** distracted!”



AN ENORMOUSE BANANA PEEL

The emergency room door **flew** open, and my whole family **BURST** in. Everyone was shouting at the same time.

“Geronimo, you’re **ALIVE!**”

“You could have been **killed. . . .**”

It’s all your
fault!



“You just made it by a **whisker. . . .**”

The doctor finished **BANDAGING** my tail, and I was released from the hospital. But my family members wouldn’t stop **scolding** me.

Pay more attention!



“It’s all your **fault!**”
Grandfather William Shortpaws barked.

“You have to pay more **attention,**



dearest nephew,” Aunt Sweetfur told me with a look of concern.

“You’re constantly **DISTRACTED**, Geronimo!” my sister, Thea, chided.

“Where was your head?” my cousin Trap asked me. “It must have been in the **clouds**, like always.”

“What were you thinking, Uncle?” my nephew Benjamin asked **SWEETLY**.

“Let me tell you what happened,” Hercule said.

You’re constantly distracted!



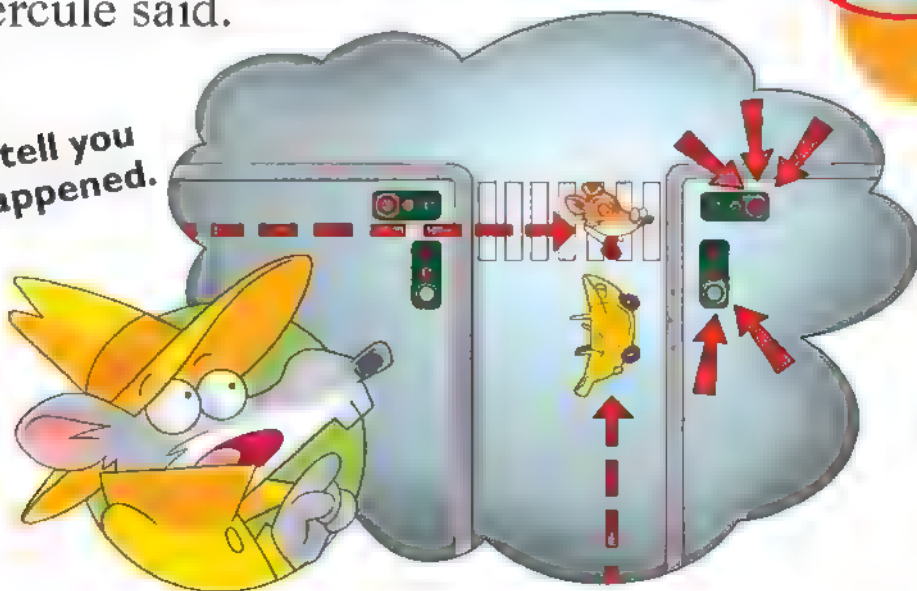
Where was your head?



What were you thinking?



Let me tell you what happened.



“I was driving the **ENORMOUSE** — you’ve seen it before, haven’t you?” Hercule asked. “It’s an enormouse yellow car shaped like a banana. It’s pretty hard to miss. Anyway, the light was **green**, but suddenly Geronimo was in front of me! Luckily, I was going **slowly**. He wasn’t paying any attention! His head was in the **CLOUDS** for sure. . . .”

Everyone shook their heads and muttered in **agreement**.

I was really **offended**. I hadn’t been distracted on purpose! I was just thinking about the **diamond** necklace that had been stolen and concentrating on ideas for my next book. When had **DAYDREAMING** become a **crime**?

To get away from all the finger-pointing and to have some **peace**, I decided to retreat to my office.



"I'm coming with you, Geronimo," Grandfather William **ANNOUNCED**. "I want to keep an **EYE** on you!"

He followed me all the way to the offices of *The Rodent's Gazette*. As soon as we got there, one of the staff writers, **Priscilla Prettywhiskers**, walked up to me and **WHISPERED** something in my ear.

"There's someone **IMPORTANT** waiting for you in your office," she said. Then she lowered her voice even more. "It's the *mayor* — fur, whiskers, and all!"

"**Double twisted rat tails!**" I exclaimed. "What an **honor!**"

I entered my office, and Mayor Frederick Fuzzypaws greeted me **cordially**.

"Good morning, Mr. Stilton!" he said. "Oh, and good morning, Mr. Shortpaws! I have **great** news for both of you. The



city will be choosing a publishing company for a very **prestigious** new safety awareness campaign, and we thought of you,” he explained.

Grandfather began to **twirl** his whiskers proudly.

“That sounds mouserific,” he said. “What’s it about?”

“The city is preparing a **booklet** on road safety education that will be distributed to all the schools in New Mouse City,” the mayor replied.





"You have no idea how many mice don't know how to **safely** get around the **STREETS** of New Mouse City," the mayor explained.

"Oh, I know one of those mice myself!" Grandfather said as he shot me a knowing **glare**.

I turned as **red** as a tomato.

"Er, yes, well, we received a lot of offers from **COMPETING** publishing companies," the mayor continued. "For example, Sally Ratmousen's company, *The Daily Rat*, made a fine offer. But we want *The Rodent's Gazette* to do this booklet!"

At the mere **MENTION** of *The Daily Rat* and Sally Ratmousen, my



**SALLY
RATHOUSEN**

*She is the unscrupulous
editor of The Daily Rat.
Her motto is: If there is
no news, we'll invent it!*



grandfather turned **PURPLE**. She and her newspaper are our biggest **RIVALS**.

"I'm glad you came to us," Grandfather said quickly. "We'll make a booklet that's **whisker-licking** good. We know how to handle road safety, right, Geronimo?"

"Of course!" I agreed **quickly**.

Suddenly, the mayor happened to notice my **BANDAGED** tail.

"Mr. Stilton, what happened?" he asked.

"Oh, **NOTHING**," I replied hastily.

"What do you mean 'nothing'?" the mayor insisted. "It's all **wrapped** up! Did you have an accident?"

My grandfather jumped in.

"You see, my grandson . . . er . . . he slipped on a banana peel!" he said. "Yes, it was an **ENORMOUSE** banana peel."

I opened my eyes wide in **surprise**.



“Huh? What peel?” I asked. “What **banana?**”

Grandfather elbowed me in the side — hard.

“Ouch!” I squeaked.

“It was an enormously **HUGE PEEL!**” Grandfather repeated.

“Right, Grandson?”

“Yes, yes. It was **huge!**” I agreed quickly as I rubbed my side. “It was a banana peel as big as . . . a **car!**”



“Ah, good, good,” the mayor replied, looking **relieved**. “For a second, I thought you didn’t know how to travel the **STREETS** safely! In about a week, your company will officially present the booklet



in New Mouse City's main square. Every reporter and television crew on **MOUSE ISLAND** will be there! And Mr. Stilton, you will give a live demonstration on **Safe DRIVING!**

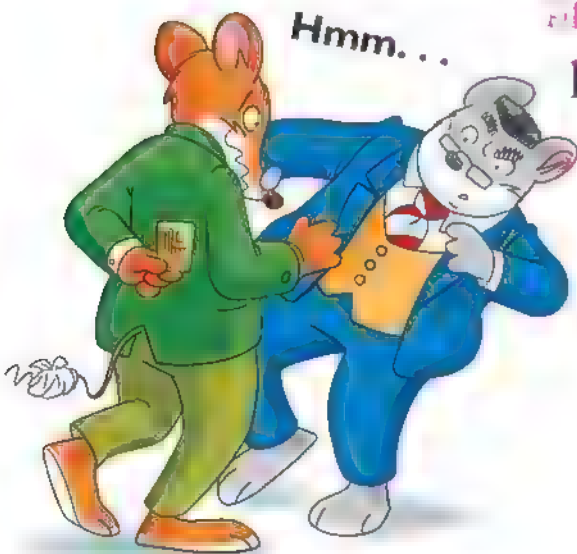
"Who, me?" I asked nervously. "I have to drive in front of **EVERYONE?**"

"Why, yes," the mayor replied. "Is there a **problem?** You have a license, right? You know how to *drive safely* through the streets of New Mouse City, correct?"

He **STARED** at me, and my grandfather

STARED at me, and I had a **very, very, veeeeery** bad feeling. But what could I do?

"Of course I have a driver's license," I said **confidently.**





“I’ve had it since I was **sixteen!**”

“Good, good,” the mayor said with a smile. “And it’s valid, right? The license hasn’t **EXPIRED**, has it?”

He peered at me, a *serious* look on his face as he waited for my answer.

I stood there with a smile **frozen** on my face as I frantically checked the license. *Squeak!* It **EXPIRED** years ago! I never drive, so I forgot to renew it!

My grandfather looked at me with **furrowed** eyebrows.

“Is there a **PROBLEM**, Grandson?” he asked.

I turned as **PALE** as a slice of mozzarella.

“No—no,” I stammered. “Everything’s just fine!”

But everything wasn’t fine! I had a **big** problem on my paws.



CONGRATULATIONS! IT'S A NEW RECORD!

The **mayor** got up to leave.

“Perfect!” he said, an **ENORMOUSE** smile on his face. “Mr. Stilton, I’ll see you in a week at the **ceremony**. And don’t forget to bring the license!”

“Of course, of course,” I stuttered. “The **LICENSE**. Yes, of course!”

I was **sweating**, and I felt sick to my stomach. I was overcome by total **PANIC**. My license had **EXPIRED**! I wouldn’t be able to drive during the ceremony!

WHAT A MESS!

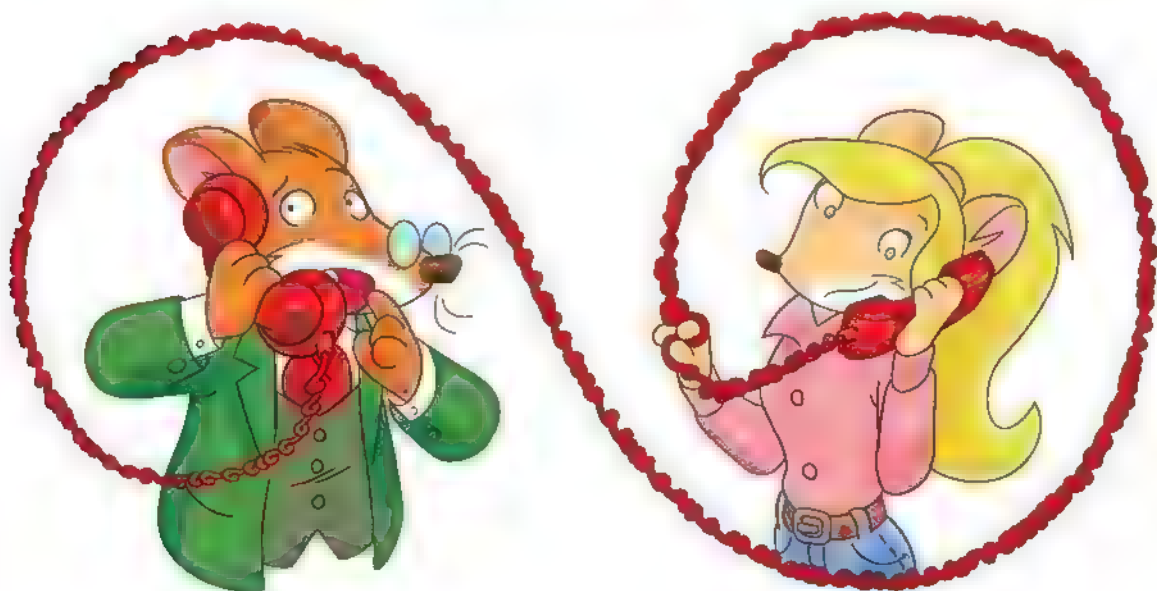
I didn’t dare say anything to Grandfather. Instead, I *decided* to call my friend **PETUNIA PRETTY PAWS**.



The truth is, I have a **huge** crush on Petunia, but I can never get up the courage to ask her out on a date! Still, I called to ask for her **help**.

“Hi, G!” Petunia answered the phone. She listened to my problem and came up with a **solution**. “You have to go to a very good **DRIVING SCHOOL**. Ask them what to do. Maybe you still have time to renew your license.”

I remembered that there was a little driving school right on my street. It was called **The Very Best Driving School in New Mouse City**,





so I figured it had to be good!

I thanked Petunia and headed straight there.

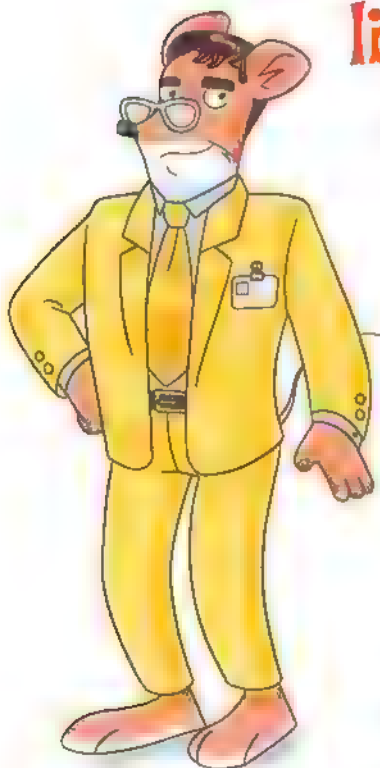
“Good morning, how may I help you?” a kind-looking rodent asked **sweetly**.

“Well, er, I know how to **drive**, yes, I do, but it’s as if I don’t.” I tried to explain. “I never drive, but I have a

license, and I have to drive in a **CEREMONY** next week, and — please, oh, please, can you **help me**?”

“Come this way!” a **SHRILL** voice behind me shouted in reply.

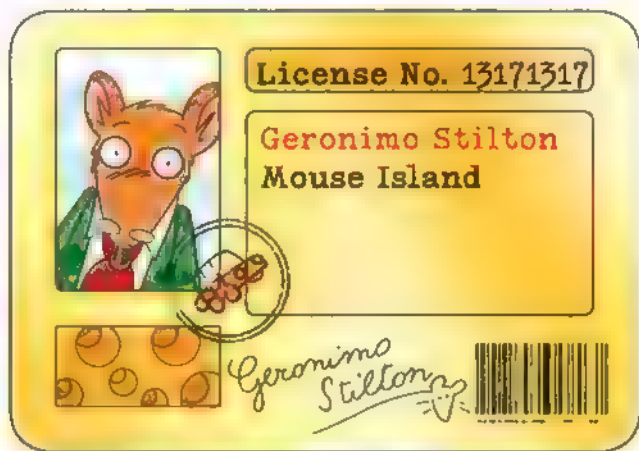
It was the owner of the driving school, **Rusty Carr**. He was a very **well-dressed** rodent in a suit and tie the color of **cheddar**





cheese. His shiny eyes were as **black** as olives and as **piercing** as needles.

Filled with hope, I handed him my license.



He took a **very quick** look at the license and shook his head.

“I have two pieces of news for you,” he said. “**First**, this license has **expired**. And **second**, you have to **RETAKE** the driving test.”

Retake the test?! I wanted to **CRY**.

“To get a **DRIVER'S LICENSE**, you need to pass both the written test and the



road test,” Rusty continued.

“I have to take **TWO** tests?” I asked. My whiskers **trembled** with fear. It’s true that I hadn’t driven in a **LOOOOONG** time, but I knew how to do it! I didn’t have time to study for **TWO** tests — the ceremony was in one week!

“But I passed both the written and driving tests **once**,” I argued. “And I’m a **VERY GOOD** driver, even if I don’t do it often.”

“Quiet, quiet, quiet!” he ordered as he gave me a **sheet** of paper with **ten** questions on it.

“No **excuses**. If you think you know everything already, then take this **quiz** and let’s see how you do.”

I glanced at the sheet and turned as **green** as a moldy piece of Brie.

CONGRATULATIONS!



IT'S A NEW RECORD!

I didn't know any of the answers!

I did the best I could and then handed him the **PAPER**. With a red pencil, he began **CROSSING OUT** one thing after another.

"Not one **correct answer!**" he announced.
"Absolutely **none**. Congratulations, you've set a new record!"



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

~~Crumbling cheese may fall on your car?~~

Noooo! Danger: Falling Rocks



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

~~Drive in a squiggly line?~~

Noooo! Slippery when wet!



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

~~Treasure buried here?~~

Noooo! Railroad crossing.



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

~~Well, let's see...~~





LEFT! RIGHT! STOP!

The written test was a **DISASTER**.

“But within a week I have to drive in front of everybody!” I wailed. My whiskers were **trembling** from the stress. “The **mayor** will be there, and reporters, and TV news cameras. Oh, what am I going to do? Please help me!”

“Relax, relax,” Rusty assured me. “All you have to do is take some **DRIVING** lessons, do some **studying**, and both tests will be a **BREEZE**!”

“Okay, where do I sign up?” I asked.

“First you have to fully **commit** yourself to learning how to drive,” he warned.

“I’ll commit myself!” I **PROMISED**.

“I’ll **yell** at you if I have to, **understand**?”

LEFT! RIGHT!



STOP!

Rusty asked.

“Yes, yes,” I agreed, getting desperate.
“**Yell** at me all you want!”

“If you’re sure . . .” Rusty replied hesitantly.

“I’m sure!” I squeaked.

“Then hop in,” Rusty told me. “The **FIRST LESSON** is about to start!”

I buckled my **SEAT BELT**, turned on the **left** signal, checked the rearview **mirror**, and slowly began to pull away from the **CURB**.



LEFT! RIGHT!



STOP!

“**WAIT!**” Rusty shouted. “You forgot to check your **SIDE** mirrors! We don’t want to be **flattened** like a slice of Swiss, do we?”

I looked in both side mirrors and saw that the coast was clear, so I began to proceed **cautiously**.

The entire time, Rusty **shouted** commands at me.

“Turn **LEFT!** Now **RIGHT!** Slow down! **Accelerate!** Now **BRAAAAAAKE!** Now **accelerate** again, then turn **RIGHT**, and

What are
you doing?



Hmm...



Aaaaaah!

Slow down!



LEFT! RIGHT!



STOP!

RIGHT, and **RIGHT** . . .”

My head was **spinning** from all his orders.

“Proceed **straight**. Now go **FORWARD!** Go **BACK!** Right! Left! **STOP!** Brake! No, not like that! Can’t you see we’re merging? You have to remain alert and **observant**.”

I was trying my best, but it seemed like everything I did was **WRONG!**

“Hey, what’s the matter with you?” Rusty asked. “That’s a **crosswalk!** Pedestrians

Turn right,
not left!



Heeeeeeeelp!



Tsk . . . No,
that’s wrong!



Not like this!





have the **RIGHT OF WAY**, got it? What are you doing? That's a **one-way** street! Didn't you see the **SIGN**?"

He shook his head at me.

Then things got even **worse**!

"Now it's going to get more **difficult**,"

Rusty warned me. "You can **never** be **DISTRACTED** while driving, Mr. Stilton — it's very **DANGEROUS**! I am going to ask you questions to **distract** you, but you have to keep your concentration! You'll drive and answer me at the **SAME TIME**!"

MOLDY MOZZARELLA! This was not going to be good!

"So, how's work?" Rusty began. "What's your **SISTER'S** name? What's **THREE** times **SIX**, divided by **two**, plus **EIGHTEEN** minus **THREE**?" Answer me — go ahead, **ANSWER!**"

LEFT! RIGHT!



STOP!

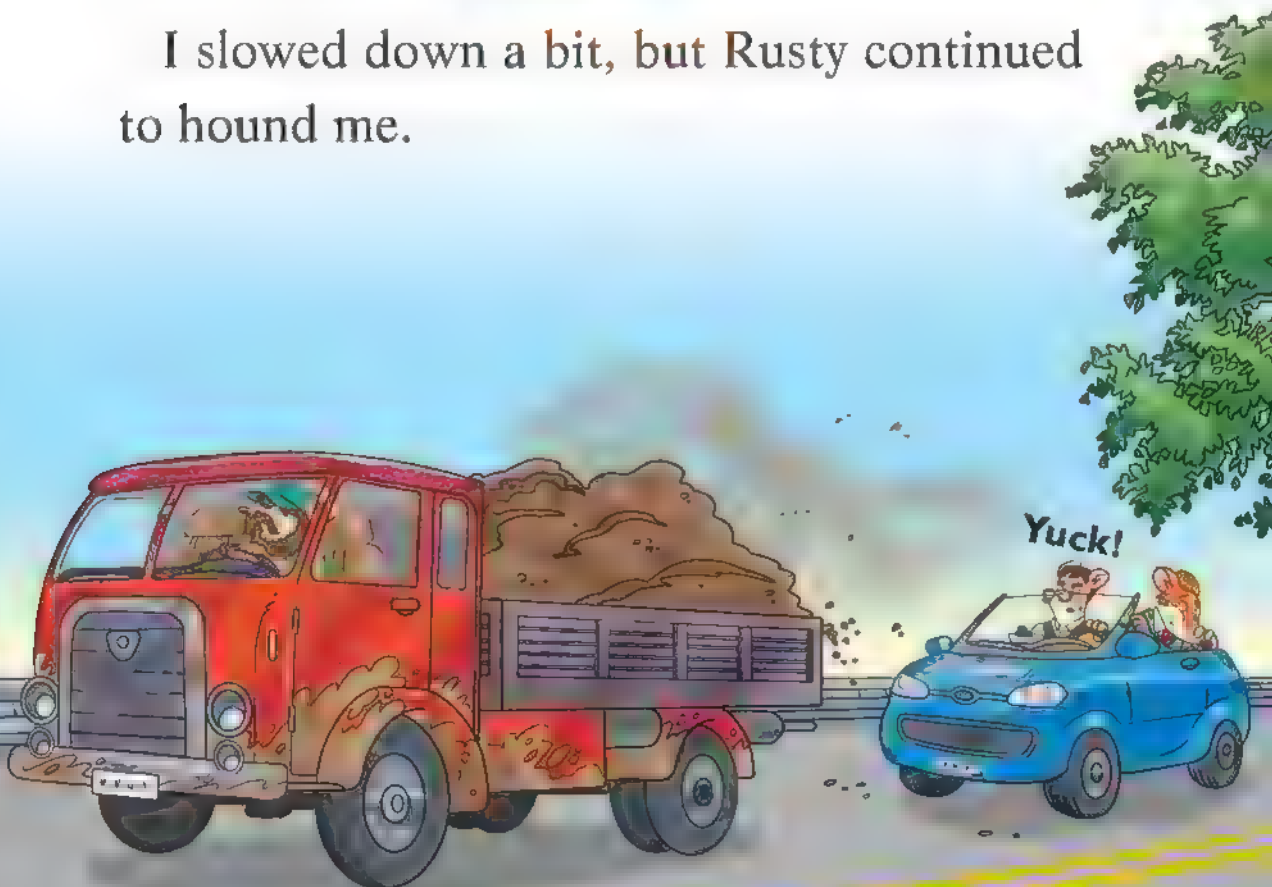
“Er, it’s f-fine,” I stammered. “Lea! I mean Thea! Um, thirty-two?”

“Now turn **right** and merge into traffic!” Rusty shouted. “Now **STOP!**”

I slammed on the brakes.

“Didn’t you see the **STOP** sign?!” Rusty scolded me. “We were almost flattened like **pancakes!** Now keep a safe distance from that truckful of **manure!**”

I slowed down a bit, but Rusty continued to hound me.





“The stench may be **vile**, but you can’t pass that truck,” he continued. “There’s a solid **LINE**! And don’t drive too close. If the truck stops **short**, we might hit it, and then that **stinky** load of manure will land right on **top** of us!”

I slowed down even more.

“What’s that **NOISE**?” Rusty asked. “You scraped the bumper against that curb! **Yikes!** You missed hitting that post, but only by less than an **inch**! There’s an **AMBULANCE** coming. Don’t you hear the **siren**? Yield and let it pass! **CONGRATULATIONS!** You’ve broken another record: ten mistakes in less than an hour!”

He shook his head.

“As far as that official **ceremony** with the mayor, there are only two solutions,” Rusty continued. “Either get someone else to



take your place, or start getting **SERIOUS** about these driving lessons!”

HUMILIATED, I lowered my head.

“I really am trying to be serious,” I mumbled. “Tell me what I have to do to **IMPROVE!**”

Rusty studied me intensely with his **shiny** black eyes.

“Each morning at seven o’clock on the **dot**, you must have a written lesson,” he said.

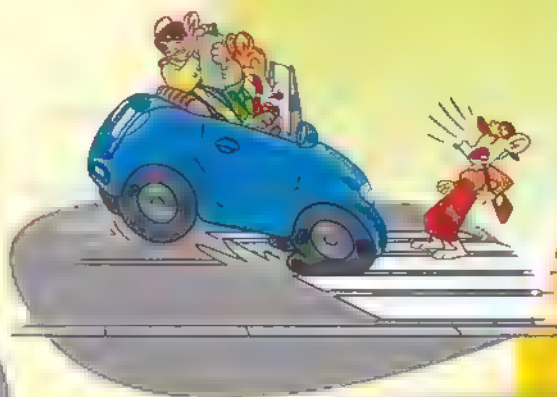
I nodded in **agreement**.

“Then after that, you need to have a **LOOOOOONG** driving lesson,” he continued. “**MAYBE**, just maybe, you might pass the test. But I have to be truthful with you: Your situation is pretty **DESPERATE!**”

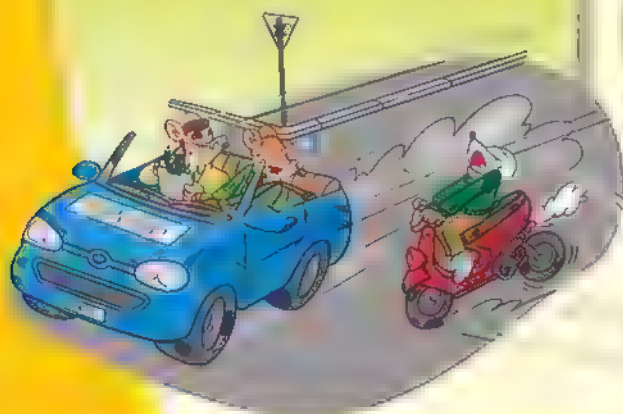
I agreed to the **LESSONS**. What else could I do?

MY FIRST DAY IN DRIVING SCHOOL

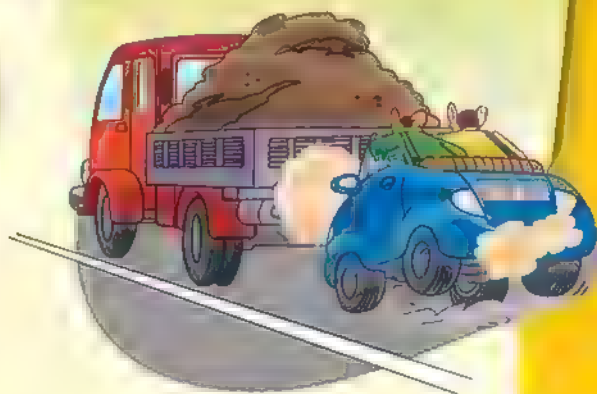
1. I ALMOST RAN
OVER A RODENT IN
THE CROSSWALK!



2. OOPS! I DIDN'T YIELD THE
RIGHT OF WAY!



3. I ALMOST HIT A TRUCK
FULL OF MANURE! YUCK!

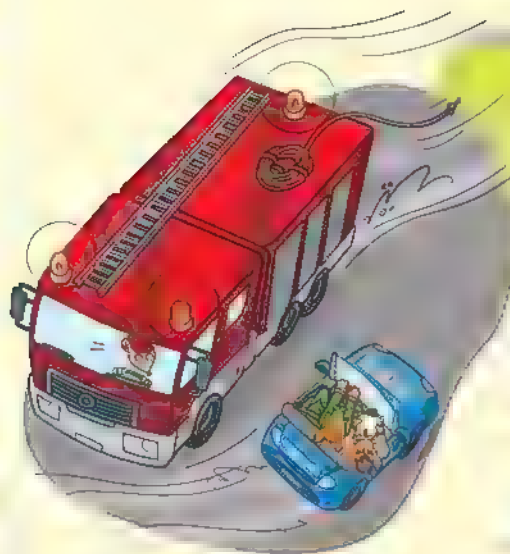


4. WHILE IN REVERSE, I HIT A
CONCRETE POST.

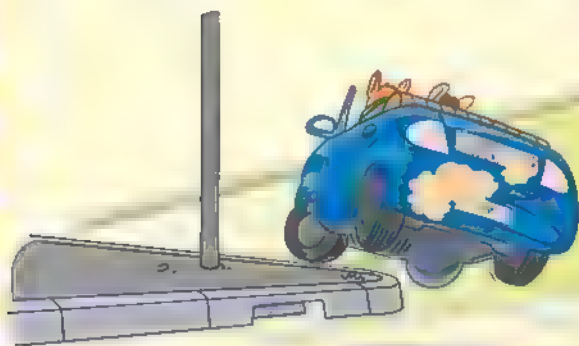
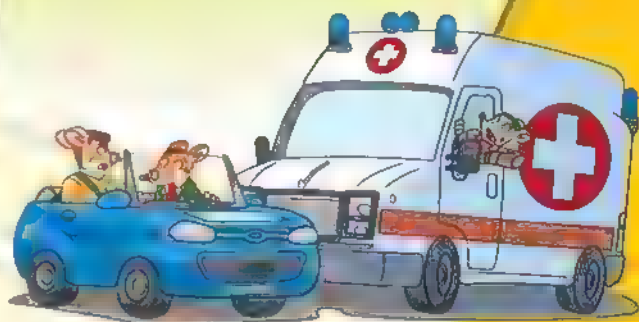


5. I HAD A TEENSY-
WEENSY PROBLEM
WITH PARKING.





6. AND 7. I CUT IN FRONT OF A FIRE TRUCK AND THEN BLOCKED AN AMBULANCE!

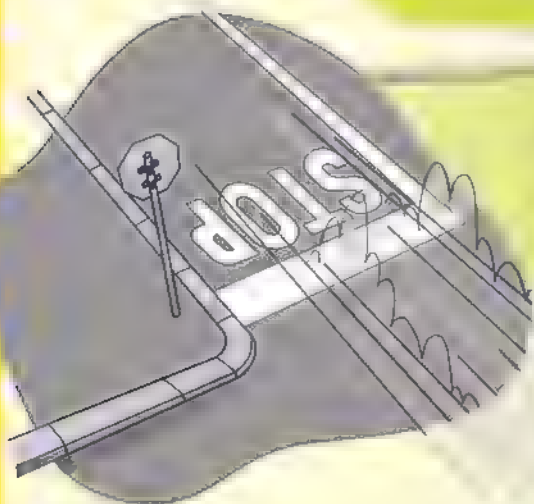


8. I RAN OVER THE CURB AS I MADE A TURN.

9. I DROVE THE WRONG WAY DOWN A ONE-WAY STREET.



10. I EVEN FORGOT TO STOP AT A STOP SIGN!



You're in a
desperate situation,
Mr. Stilton!





YOU'RE A LOOSE CANNON!

From that day on, I arrived *punctually* at seven o'clock every morning for my written lesson and my driving lesson. Then I *RACED* to my office to work on the booklet on *road safety* for the mayor's office.

On the morning of the fourth day, Rusty greeted me with a *DEVILISH* grin.

"Well, well, let's see if you're ready," he said, rubbing his paws together. Then he began pointing to an *ENORMOUSE* chart with lots of *STREET SIGNS* as he shouted out one question after another.

"What does this *SIGN* mean?" he asked. "And this one? And how about this one? *HMMMM?*"



I **froze**. I couldn't remember **anything**!
“**‘Bicycle path’?**” I guessed. It was
the first thing that **POPPED** into my head.
“No, no. Maybe ‘no entry to **bicycles**’? Or
‘switch the circles’? ‘Caution, **GEOMETRY**
test ahead’? Maybe, ‘right of way’? Or
maybe . . . I don't know!”

I was so **stressed out**, my tail was
twisted into tiny knots.

I COULDN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING!





Rusty threw his paws in the air.

“I don’t **believe** it!” he exclaimed.
“You’re a **loose cannon**! You’re **LUCKY**
your license **expired**, because you really
needed this **REFRESHER**! You’re a
complete **basket of nerves**! But don’t
worry — I’ll help you get through this.”

After the written lesson, I took my **DRIVING
LESSON**, and then I went straight to the office
to work on the **ROAD SAFETY** booklet. In
the booklet, I tried to explain the importance
of abiding by the **rules of the road**.

There were only three more days until
the booklet was due, so I worked **day** and
night. I finally finished it and **emailed**
it to the editor. Then I collapsed and fell
ASLEEP with my snout on top of my laptop
computer.

I dreamed that an **ENORMOUSE** traffic

YOU'RE A



LOOSE CANNON!

cop was **blowing** his whistle and shaking his head as he wrote me a **TRAFFIC TICKET**.

“You’re not ready, Mr. Stilton,” he said. “You still have to work **very** hard . . . **very, very** hard, yes, **EXTREMELY** hard!”



A GOLDEN CLOUD

When I woke up the following **morning** at ten minutes to seven, the imprints of all the **computer** keys were stamped on my face.

I rushed over to **The Very Best Driving School in New Mouse City** for my fifth day of lessons. Everything was going very well, and Rusty even let a teeny tiny **compliment** escape.

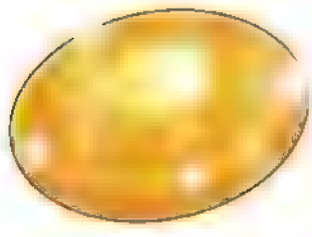
“Not bad, not bad,” he said. “You’re **ALMOST** ready!”

But that’s when something **strange** happened.

I heard a police **siren** behind me and I instinctively pulled over to the side of the road. It was a good thing I did because an instant later, a **golden** car whizzed by



me. It was moving so **fast** I thought it was a **missile**!



The car's motor made no noise. It only emitted a strange **HUM**, like a purring cat. I tried to figure out who was driving the **MYSTERIOUS** vehicle, but the windows were **TINTED** and I couldn't see inside. But I did see a strange symbol of a **golden sun** on the car's hood.

Immediately after the car drove by, a **SILVER** car that was otherwise identical to the gold one went **ZOOMING** by. It was almost as though the silver car was **chasing** the golden one!

"Huh?" Rusty asked. "Wha —?"

Whatever he said was **DROWNED OUT** by the sound of the police sirens as they chased after **BOTH** cars.

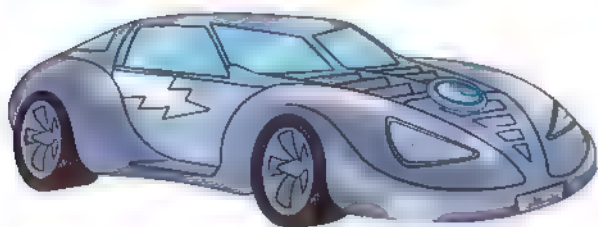
Then something incredibly **STRANGE** happened.

The **golden** car stopped right in front of us. The sun's rays **illuminated** it like a golden star and I peered into the driver's side, trying to get a glimpse of the **DRIVER**.

Suddenly, we heard a loud **CLICK** and the golden car



DISAPPEARED



The SILVER car that was following the golden car **accelerated**. A few seconds later, it slipped over the HORIZON and was out of sight.

The police car pulled up alongside us, and **Inspector Clue Rat** climbed out. He is New Mouse City's **CHIEF OF POLICE**.

"Cheddar cheese sticks!" Inspector Rat exclaimed in frustration. "Those two cars got away!"

He turned and saw Rusty and me.

"Mr. Stilton!" he said. "Did you see that? What do you think made that golden car **DISAPPEAR**?"

I shook my head.

"I have no idea," I replied. "It was very **MYSTERIOUS**. But I did hear a **clicking**

sound, which makes me think there was some sort of **mechanical** trick.”

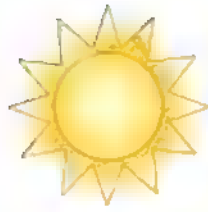
I turned to ask Rusty his opinion, but he was calling someone on his cell phone (**who?**), whispering something (**what?**), and looking mysterious (**why?**).

A second later, he hung up the phone.

“Lesson’s over,” Rusty said to me **impatiently**.
“Let’s **GOOOOO**, Mr. Stilton! I have a very **IMPORTANT** meeting to attend.”

Psst . . . psst . . .





YOU CAN CALL ME SOL

We drove back to **The Very Best Driving School in New Mouse City** in silence, which was very **UNUSUAL**. Rusty usually spent every minute of my lesson **shouting** orders at me! I didn't know why he was acting so **STRANGELY**.

"I'll see you **TOMORROW**, Rusty!" I said as I hopped out of the car.

"No, no lessons **TOMORROW**," he replied. "I'm busy tomorrow!"

Strange! How very **STRANGE!**

I hurried to the office and worked all day to **get ready** for the big event with the mayor and to look over the final draft of the **ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION**

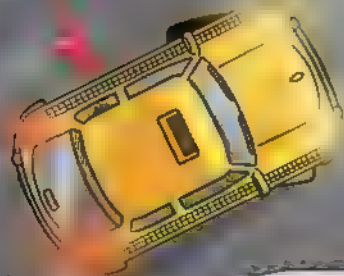
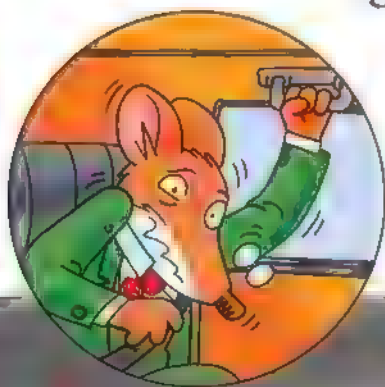
booklet before it was printed.

On my way home that evening, I mulled over the morning's very **STRANGE** events. Why had the silver car been chasing the gold one? And what was Rusty being so **SECRETIVE** about? I was almost at my front door when I heard a peculiar noise: **CLICK!**



Startled, I turned around and let out a **yelp**. A **dazzling** cloud of light appeared, and suddenly the mysterious golden car was sitting right in front of me!

As soon as it appeared, the golden car **ZOOMED** off. The same **SILVER** car from earlier that morning was chasing it again! I don't know why, but I had a feeling the **golden** car was in trouble. I had to **HELP** it! Without thinking,



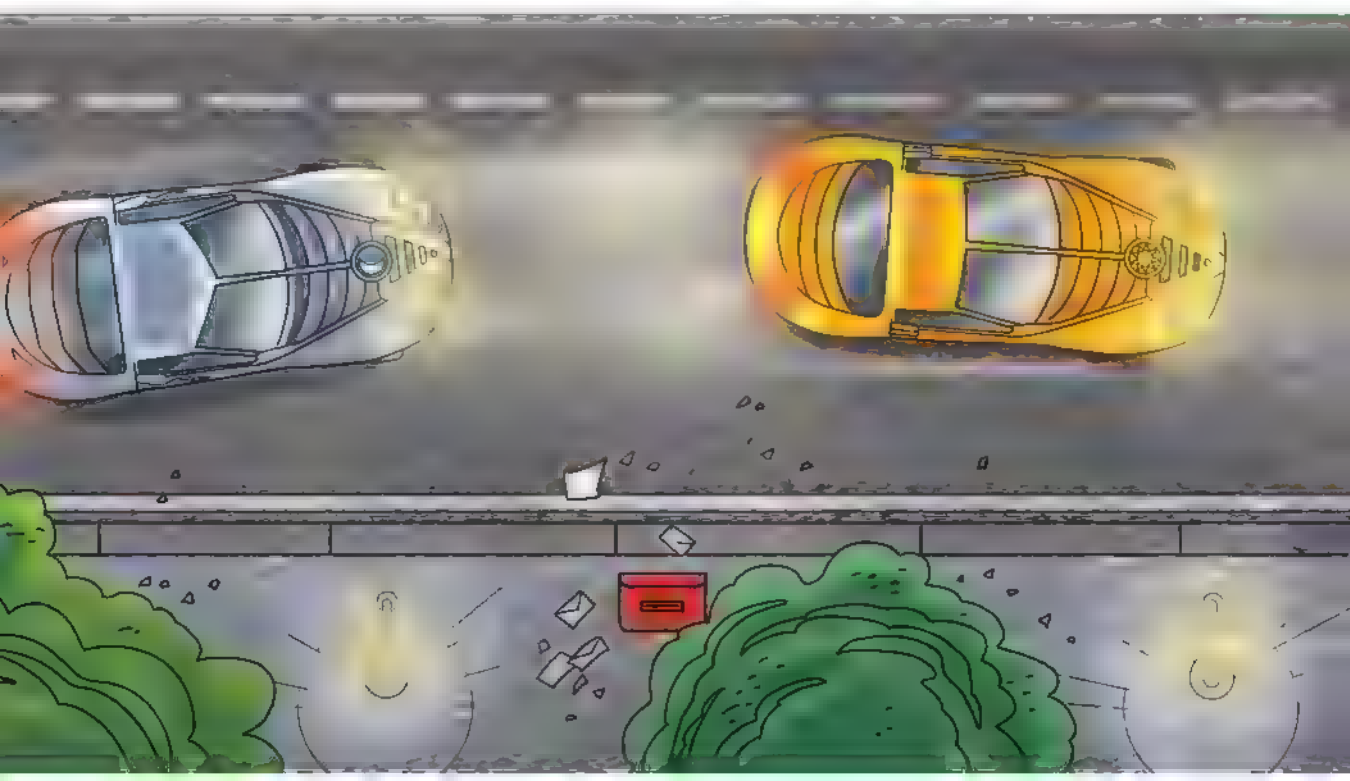
I hailed a taxi and dashed off in **HOT PURSUIT**.

Fortunately, it was already **evening**, and there was no one on the streets of New Mouse City, so it wasn't so difficult for a **taxi** to follow the two cars.

Suddenly, I heard a sound. *Click!* The **golden** car disappeared into the night.

"Aaaah!" the taxi driver yelled. "A **GHOST** car!"

He wanted to drop me off right then and





there, but I promised I'd pay him **double** if he kept on **DRIVING**. So we kept following the **SILVER** car. It was heading toward the **PARK**.

We followed the car, turning onto the wide, **TREE-LINED** avenue inside the park. Then I heard a familiar sound. *Click!* The mysterious golden car **rematerialized** right in front of us, and the **SILVER** car was right on its tail!

This time, I made up my mind not to **LOSE** them.

"Please keep up!" I told the taxi driver. "I'll pay you **TRIPLE!**"

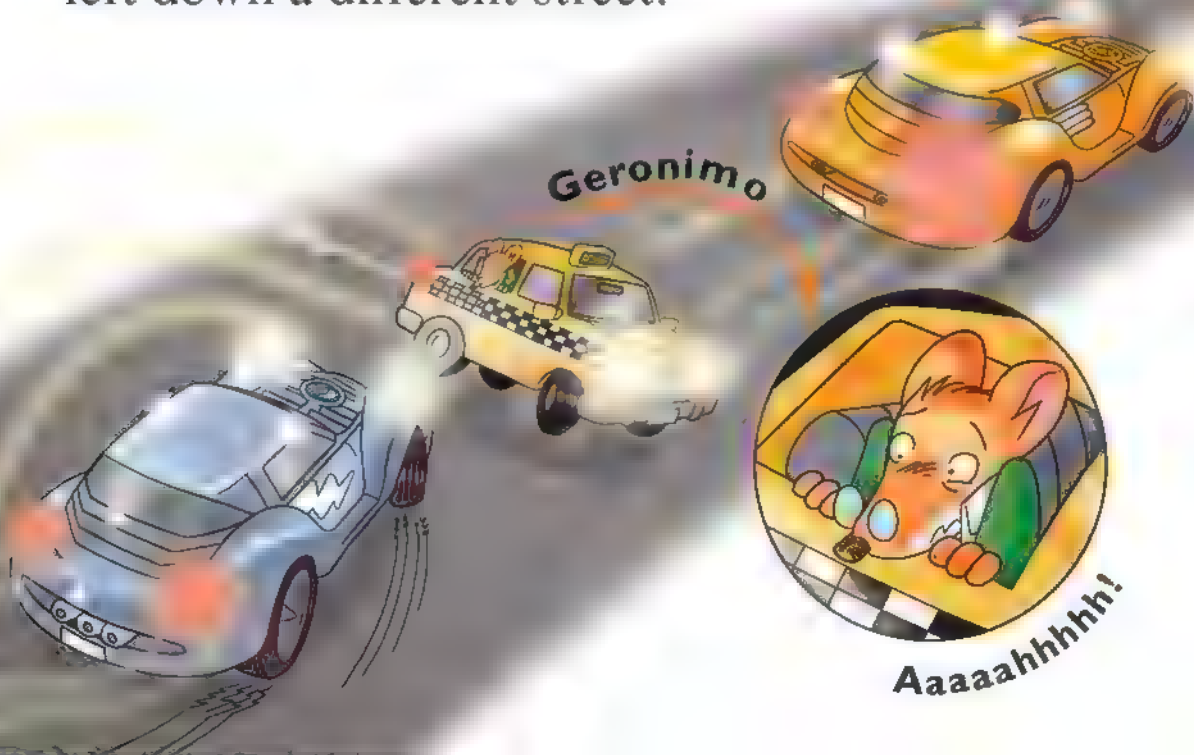
We were right behind the silver car when I noticed that while there was a **DRIVER** in the silver car, there was **NO ONE** at the wheel of the **golden** car!

How was that possible?!

Suddenly I knew how I could stop the **WILD** car chase. I noticed that the tree-lined avenue became **wider** down the road.

“Quick!” I shouted to the driver. “Pass that car!”

The taxi driver **passed** the silver car and then swiftly applied the brakes. To avoid **HITTING** us, the silver car was forced to veer right onto a side street. The **golden** car took the opportunity to turn left down a different street.



The silver car abandoned the chase and quickly **DISAPPEARED** into the night, while the **TERRIFIED** cab driver stopped abruptly.

“That’s it!” he squeaked. “I’ve had enough of **GHOST** cars!”

The driver **KICKED** me out of the **taxi**.

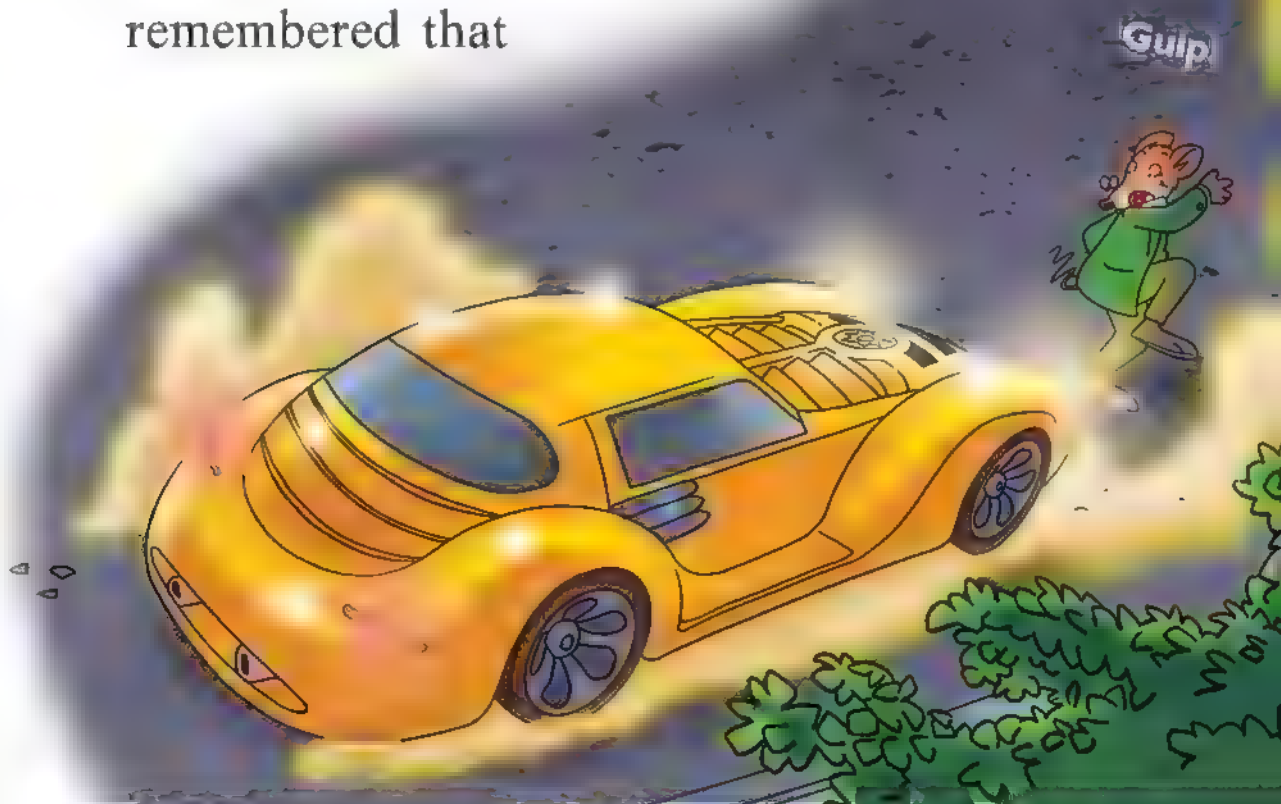
“I’ll send your bill to you at home, Mr. Stilton!” he shouted at me as he **sped** away. “And I’m warning you: It will be very, very **EXPENSIVE!**”



He left me there all alone, feeling like a fool. I had stopped a **DANGEROUS** car chase, which was a **good** thing. But I couldn't figure out what had actually happened. **It was a real mystery!**

Then I heard a click and a **METALLIC** voice behind me. It said only two words: "**THANK YOU.**"

For a second, I thought the voice sounded a lot like my sister, Thea, but then I remembered that





she was away on a research trip this week, so it couldn't be her. I **JUMPED** back and **whirled** around.

"Who said that?" I **squeaked**.

Behind me was the **golden** car.

Had the car **spoken** to me? And where had it come from? Was it possible I was **dreaming**? To be absolutely certain I was awake, I pulled one of my **whiskers**.

"Yeow!" I yelped. I was definitely **awake**.

Then the voice spoke again.

"I AM SOLAR, A ROBOT CAR," the voice said. **"YOU CAN CALL ME SOL. WHO ARE YOU?"**

For a second, my mouth dropped open in **amazement**. Not only did the car talk, but it also had a name: **Solar**. The name suited it perfectly, because it **shone** just like the **golden sun**!



As soon as I got my **WITS** about me I answered.

“Ahem, my name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*.”

“**THANK YOU FOR HELPING ME, GERONIMO STILTON,**” Sol said. “**I TRUST YOU. I WOULD BE HONORED IF YOU WOULD BE MY DRIVER.**”

I was very **confused**. Surely Sol didn’t need a driver — the car was able to **drive** itself! But I was **flattered** that the car had asked me, and I didn’t want to say **NO**.

“Ahem, I suppose I could, sure, yes, of course!” I **stammered**. “But I have a little **PROBLEM**: I didn’t renew my **DRIVER’S LICENSE!**”



SOL'S SECRET

"GET IN!" Sol ordered. "I WILL DRIVE! FOR NOW, YOU ARE A PASSENGER! YOU'LL BE MY DRIVER AFTER YOU RENEW YOUR LICENSE. I WILL TAKE YOU TO A SECRET PLACE, A PLACE I CALL HOME."

So I got in the car. What **else** could I do? Sol drove for a **long time**. The motor **hummed** sweetly as the miles wore





on. It was so *quiet*, I fell asleep in the backseat as the car steered and performed all the necessary *maneuvers* to drive. I *woke up* when the car stopped.

We were in a *place* I can't tell you about, on a *street* I can't tell you about, in front of a *GOVERNMENT BUILDING* I can't tell you about! That's because I gave my *RODENT'S WORD* to keep it a *SECRET*, and I *always* keep my word!

I can only tell you that Sol drove into a long, narrow *RECTANGULAR* room that slowly began to *descend*. I quickly realized it was an *ENORMOUSE* elevator, big enough for a *car*! The elevator stopped, the doors in front of us opened, and we found ourselves in an *immense* room where lots of *technicians* in white lab coats were busy operating some *BIZARRE* machinery.



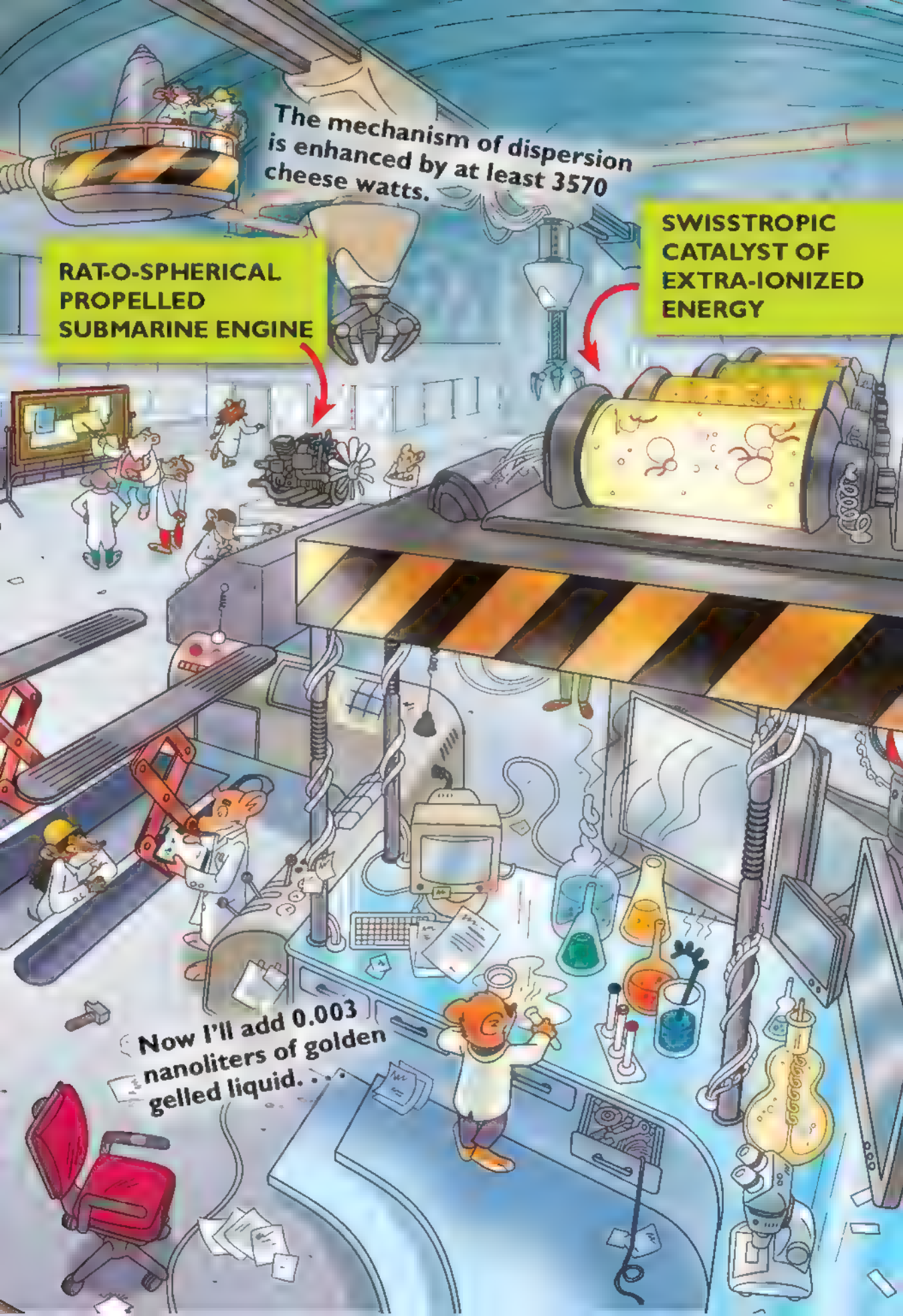
**PRESSURIZED BUBBLY
COOLING LIQUID**

Holey
cheese!

Professor! The
mousetropic impact
is equal to $\Sigma 5491!$

Thank you!

Here's the last load!



The mechanism of dispersion
is enhanced by at least 3570
cheese watts.

**RAT-O-SPHERICAL
PROPELLED
SUBMARINE ENGINE**

**SWISSTROPIC
CATALYST OF
EXTRA-IONIZED
ENERGY**

Now I'll add 0.003
nanoliters of golden
gelled liquid...



It was a **mysterious** scientific laboratory! I was **puzzled** about the kinds of **experiments** that were being conducted there. I was about to ask **Sol**, but I realized the car was no longer by my side!

Sol had driven over to a mouse in a lab coat who was bent over a table **LITTERED** with different-sized test tubes filled with **colored** liquids. The scientist seemed to be completely **absorbed** in his task.

"DAD!" Sol exclaimed.

"Sol!" the scientist replied as he turned around.

As soon as the mouse turned, I recognized **PROFESSOR PAWS VON VOLT!**

"What are you doing here, professor?" I exclaimed in **surprise**.

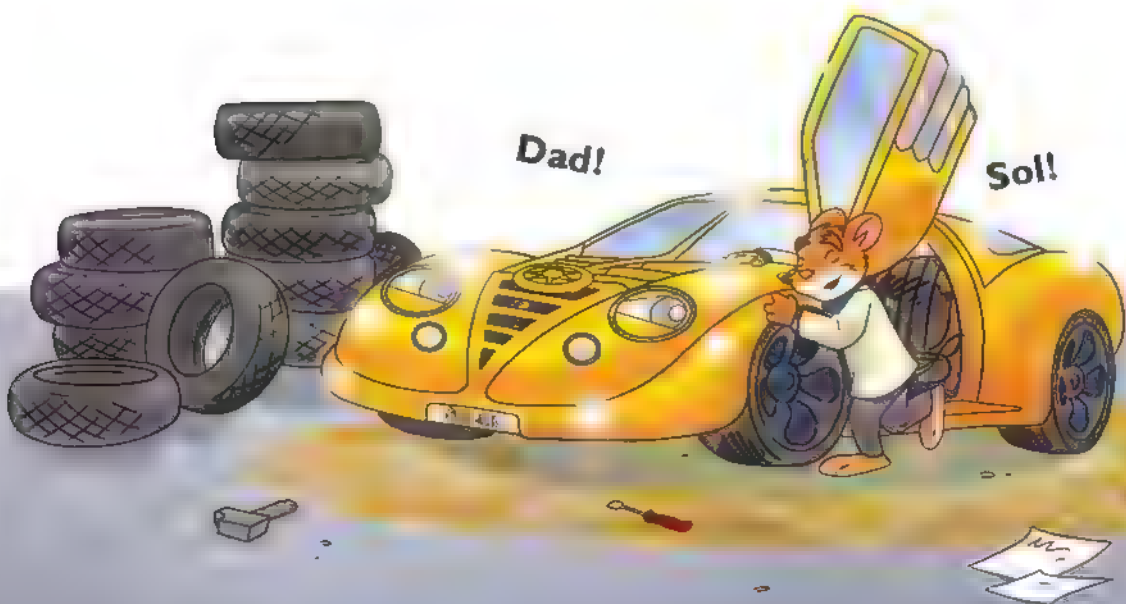
He had a **mysterious** look about him.



“My friend, I’m so happy to see you!” he replied. “I see you’ve discovered my latest **INVENTION**: Solar, the first talking robot car in the world! It is an extremely precious experimental *prototype*. Thank you for bringing it back to me in one **PIECE**!”

“I WOULD HAVE FIGURED IT OUT BY MYSELF,” Sol said. *“BUT HE WAS ALL RIGHT. HE IS VERY POLITE. I LIKE THIS MOUSE.”*

Professor von Volt gave **Solar** an affectionate pat.





“Solar is part of a **SECRET** project in the fight against **CRIME** in New Mouse City!” the professor told me. “The **best** scientists in all of Mouse Island worked together to build Solar,” he continued. “In fact, they’re all members of the **VON VOLT FAMILY**.” Then he pressed a **RED** button and spoke into a microphone that came out of a little door. “Urgent meeting in **Lab Two**!”

Two **breathless** rodents arrived at once. One had red hair and **GLASSES** perched on the tip of his snout. The letter *D* was monogrammed on his shirt.

“This is my nephew, Dewey von Volt,” the professor introduced him.

The other was a rodent with shiny eyes that were as **BLACK** as olives and as *piercing* as needles. It was Rusty Carr!



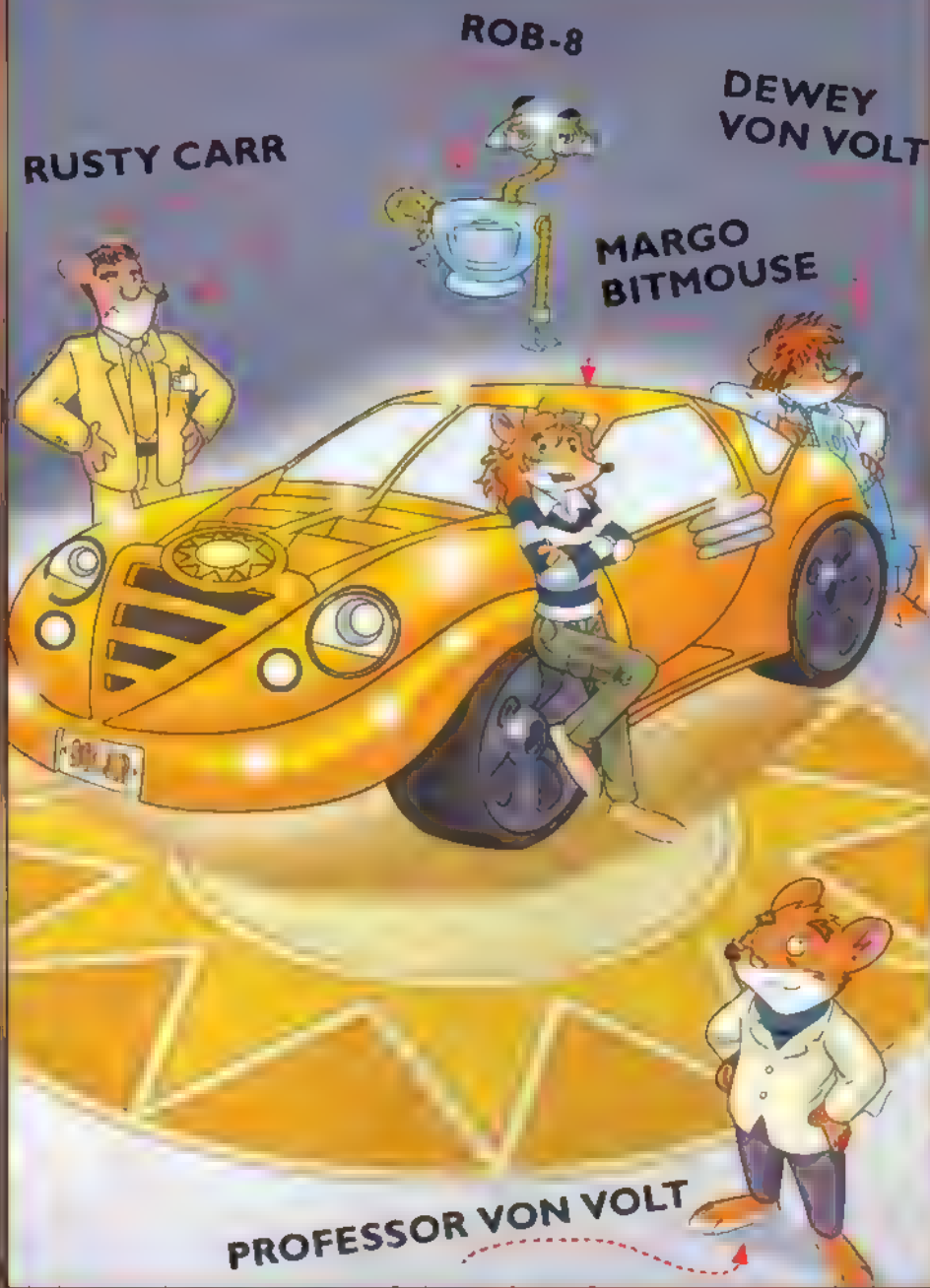
“Rusty?” I asked in **shock**. “What are you doing here?”

“Geronimo, do you already know my cousin Rusty?” Professor von Volt asked in **surprise**. “He’s a very *skillful* mechanical engineer as well as an excellent **DRIVING** instructor!”

The next to arrive was a rodent with **RED** hair and eyes as green as *emeralds*. It was **MARGO Bitmouse**, a well-known



THE LEGENDARY VON VOLT FAMILY





computer expert in New Mouse City. She was Professor von Volt's second cousin!

Finally, a little **ROBOT** joined the group.

"And this is **Rob-8**," Professor von Volt said as he finished the introductions.

"Good! *Everyone's here!*" Professor von Volt said seriously. "Now we can give **Sol** a complete exam to make sure it hasn't been **damaged**. Geronimo, if you'd like, I'll have someone take you home."

But Sol **pip**ed up.

"**NO**," the car said. "**HE STAYS HERE. I WANT HIM TO BE MY DRIVER.**"

"Him?!" Rusty Carr shouted loudly in **protest**. "But he's a **terrible** driver! I should know — I'm his **DRIVING INSTRUCTOR!**"



I WANT HIM!

But Sol insisted.

"I WANT GERONIMO STILTON," the car said stubbornly. *"HIM AND ONLY HIM."*

I turned to Sol.

"Rusty is right," I admitted. "I really **stink** at driving. And I still have to **pass** the driving test!"

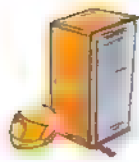
"I WANT STILTON," the car insisted. *"STILTON, AND NO ONE ELSE!"*

Holey cheese! This car was so stubborn! Sol reminded me more and more of my sister, Thea.

Professor von Volt sighed.

"All right," he agreed reluctantly. "But first Geronimo has to read Sol's **operating manual** from front to back, and then he

I WANT



HIM!

has to pass the **DRIVING TEST!**"

Professor von Volt turned to Rusty.

"Please have Geronimo take the test tomorrow at **dawn**, before Sol leaves for its next **mission**," he said.

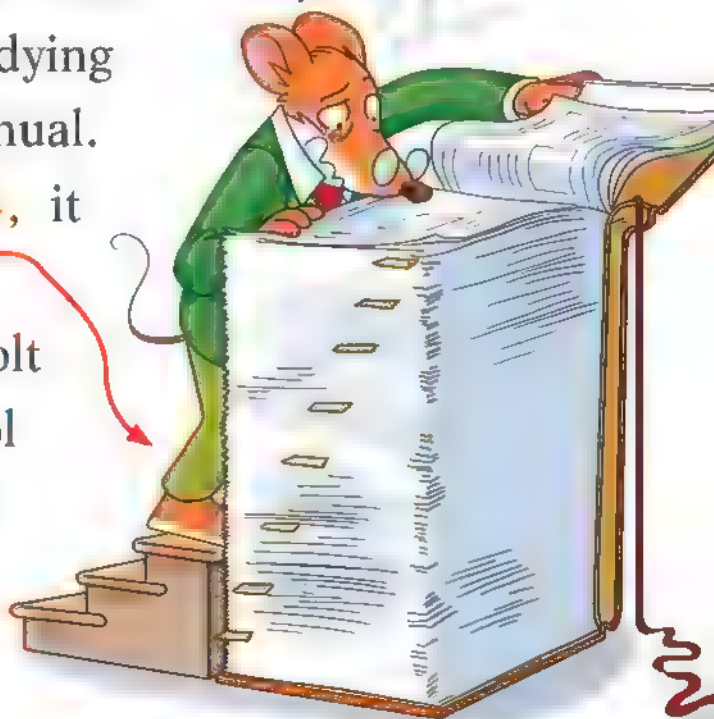
Sol beeped its horn happily. **Beeeeep!**

Then a bunch of technicians took Sol to the maintenance department for a **checkup**. I put my snout to the **GRINDSTONE** and began going over all the **rules** of the road so I would be sure to pass the driving test. After that I started studying Sol's operating manual.

Holey cheese, it was **ten feet tall!**

Professor von Volt explained that Sol was a **ROBOT** car

Holey cheese! I'll never finish. . . .

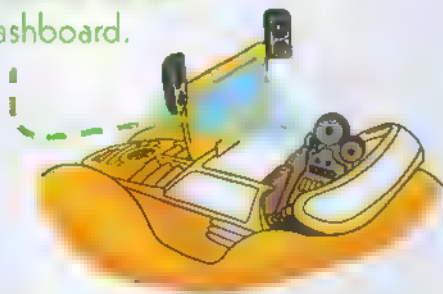


SOLAR, THE CAR OF THE FUTURE

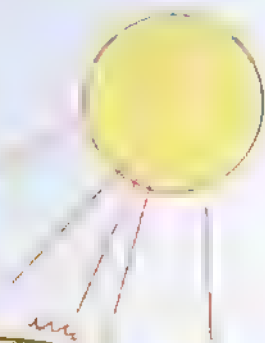
Also known as Sol, it's the first talking robot car in the world!

- Thanks to a very powerful electromagnetic screen, it can become invisible.
- When the driver wears a special pair of sunglasses, Sol can connect directly to the driver's mind so the two can communicate without speaking!
- Sol does not pollute the environment, and its engine is completely silent!

Movie projector
installed on the
dashboard.



333-horsepower engine
propelled by solar energy.

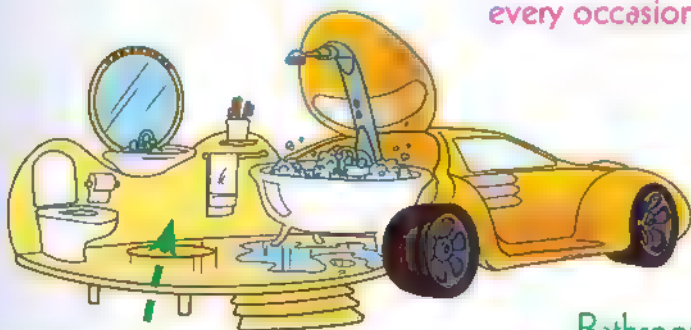
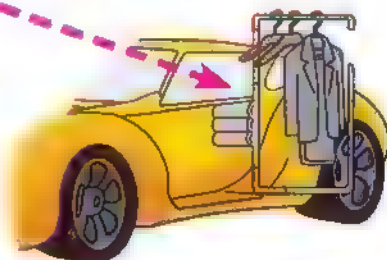


Sol's massive golden
medallion is shaped like
the sun and measures the
distance to all possible
obstacles.



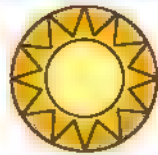
Three-in-one
hood can
transform into
a motorcycle, a
skateboard, or
a pair of roller
skates.

Pop-out closet
with clothes for
every occasion.



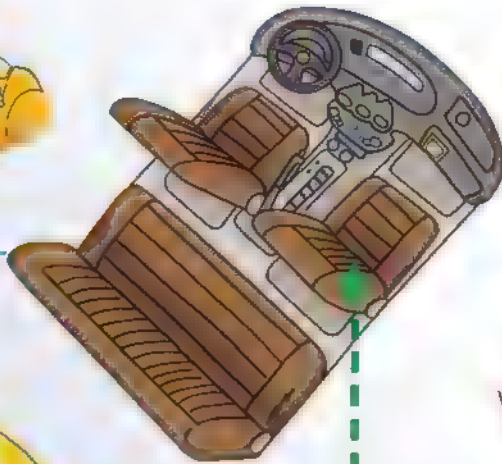
Bathroom with tub and shower
is stored in the trunk.

Antitheft device: If a thief gets into the car, he or she will be ejected through the sunroof.

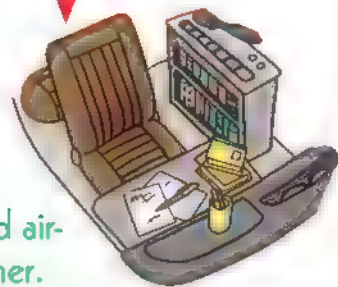


Office area with built-in library for sudden brainstorms.

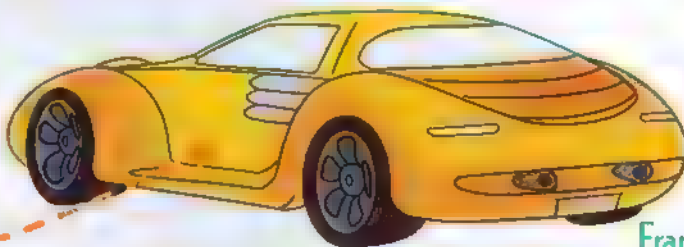
Sleep area with extra-comfy mattress for sweet dreams.



Heated seats in the winter and air-conditioned seats in the summer.



All of Sol's metal parts are made of solid gold!



Sophisticated computer system.



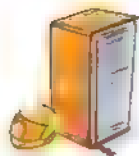
Framed photo of Professor von Volt is on display on the glove compartment door.

Snack area serves cold drinks and cheesy treats.



Dashboard oven can bake fresh cookies and pizza.





with microcircuits of mini **autofuzzies** and **bumblezizzles**, with ten thousand cheesy watts of power provided by thirteen different **gaggle-waggles**.

I couldn't understand a thing!

The only thing I did understand was that the circuits that made up Sol's electronic **brain** were modeled after my sister **Thea's** brain!

"I tried to **RECONSTRUCT** the brain of the smartest and toughest rodent in New Mouse City: your **SISTER**, Thea!" Professor von Volt told me.

Holey cheese!



So that's why whenever Sol spoke it reminded me of **THEA!**

That's probably also why Sol and I got **along** so well! Thea drives me **CHEESY** sometimes, but



deep down we really do **love** each other.

I also found that Sol had all the **comforts** of home, including a movie projector on the dashboard and a stereo system that played relaxing **background** music that changed according to the mood of the driver. Sol could also make **photocopies**, send **emails**, and **MAKE** thirty-three different kinds of *hot chocolate*, including my **favorite**: with **WHIPPED CREAM** on top! And Sol could bake cheesy chip **COOKIES** and pizza, including my **favorite** variety: triple cheese!

By pushing a button, one of the backseats became a **comfy** bed with a very soft mattress and a **TINY** built-in nightstand and lamp.

And the trunk transformed itself into a **POP-UP** bathroom equipped with every necessity imaginable: a tub with **ENERGIZING**



or **RELAXING** bath salts, depending on the driver's **mood**; a shower; a toilet; a sink; and a toothbrush that dispensed **Swiss cheese**-flavored toothpaste!

The **backseat** could transform itself into a mini-kitchen with an **OVEN** and a small **STORAGE** area stocked with all the **finest** cheeses. And the front seat could become a tiny office with a **BUILT-IN LIBRARY** and a mini-desk for sudden **brainstorms**! For a writer like me, it was the **CAT'S MEOW**.

I had just finished reading the **ten-foot-tall** manual when Rusty and Professor von Volt came in.

"Did you finish giving Sol the once-over?" I asked him.

"Not yet," Rusty replied with a **shake** of his head. "There's still one **LiTTLe** thing



I need to do, and then Sol will be ready. But how about you? Are you **ready**? Did you study for the driver's test? And did you read the **ENORMOUSE** manual? Huh? Did you? **DID YOU?**"

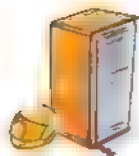
My whiskers **trembled** with stress.

"I did my **BEST!**" I squeaked **nervously**. "I think I understand it all, except for one thing: How does Sol **DISAPPEAR?**"

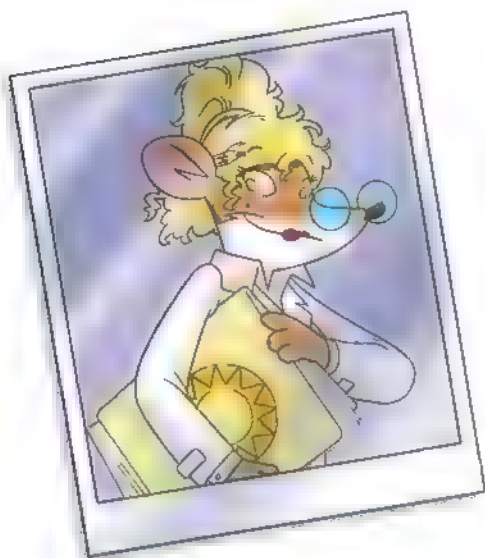
"It's simple," Professor von Volt answered. "Sol emits a special **reflective** screen that **mirrors** its surroundings and **camouflages** it."

"**Incredible!**" I exclaimed. "Does the **SILVER** car disappear, too?"

"No," Rusty answered. "The silver car cannot **disappear**. That car is named **Lunar**. My sister, **CARLOTTA**, created it. She is the best electrical engineer on



Mouse Island, and she was part of the team that designed Solar.”



He pulled a **picture** out of his wallet and showed it to me.

“This is Carlotta,” he said with a sad **sigh**. “One day she suggested I use Solar to **commit crimes** like **ROBBING BANKS**.

Obviously, I refused. Then she tried to **STEAL** Sol! But Sol understood what was **happening** and was able to activate all its **SAFETY** mechanisms and **ANTITHEFT** devices.

“When we **designed** Sol, we equipped it with a **code of ethics** that would never allow it to do anything **DISHONEST!**” Professor von Volt added.

I WANT



HIM!

“Unfortunately, Carlotta stole the design and built another car similar to Sol, but without the **code of ethics!**” Rusty continued. “She even tried to **destroy** Sol, but she foiled her own plans by activating the **ALARM** system!”

“Carlotta fled with the stolen plans, but she lost one piece of them: the **sheet** with the instructions to render the car **invisible!**” Professor von Volt explained. “That’s why **Lunar**, the car Carlotta built, can’t disappear! And that’s why she’s constantly trying to capture **Solar:**



She wants to discover the secret of its **INVISIBILITY** and then **DESTROY** it!”





MISSION IMPOSSIBLE!

I was shocked at what I had just heard. It was so **SAD** to hear that Carlotta wanted to use Solar's incredible **technological** advances to commit crimes. What an **unhappy** rodent Carlotta must be!

Rusty's voice **shook** me from my thoughts.

"Enough **mooping!**" Rusty squeaked. "You're about to go on your first **MISSION** as Solar's driver. But before you can **drive** Solar, you have to pass the driving **TEST**. Are you **READY? Let's go!**"

My whiskers **trembled** with excitement and **FEAR**. Rusty handed me the test.

To pass the *written* part of the exam, I had to:



1. Answer all ten questions.
2. Not make a single mistake!

For the driving part of the **exam**, I had to drive Sol around for **twenty** minutes while Rusty and Professor von Volt watched from a **hidden** camera.

“If you make even the **tiniest** mistake, we’ll see it **IMMEDIATELY!**” Rusty told me. “If you drive **well**, we’ll renew your license. But if you drive **poorly**, Sol will **FLING** you out of the car, and we won’t renew your license!”

“Yikes!” I squeaked **nervously**. “I’ll try my **best!**”

I started the written part of the test. **Incredibly**, I managed to answer all ten questions without making even the **teeniest** error!

“Well done, Geronimo!” Rusty said with

a **GRIN**. “Now comes the fun part: the **DRIVING** test! Are you **REEEEADY**?”

At that moment, **Sol** came toward me slowly. Next to it was **MARGO BITMOUSE**. Her big green eyes made my **heart** skip a beat!

Sol **revved** its motor.

“**WHAT IS THE HOLDUP, STILTON?**” Sol asked. “**ARE YOU GETTING IN OR NOT?**”

Margo Bitmouse **squeezed** my shoulder and **smiled** at me.

“Now it’s up to you, Geronimo!” she said. “Do your best!”

“Make sure you **pass**!” Rusty ordered me. “Don’t make me look bad.”

Good luck,
Geronimo!





“Take care of Sol,” Professor von Volt said **nervously**. “It’s the only **prototype** of its kind in the **world!**”

I placed my paw on my **HEART**.

“I promise to defend Sol with my **LIFE**,” I said solemnly. “I give you my word. **RODENT’S HONOR!**”

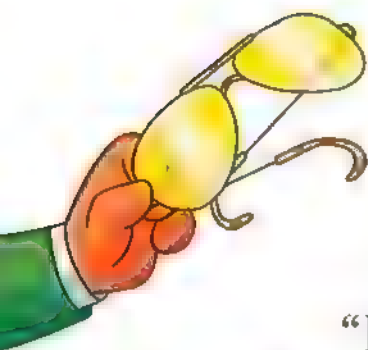
“We have to ask you to **never** divulge the location of our secret **LABORATORY**,” Margo Bitmouse added.

“I will never **REVEAL** it to anyone,” I promised. “I give you my word. **RODENT’S HONOR!**”

“Then it’s time for you to begin your first **mission**,” Margo Bitmouse said.

“And your **DRIVING TEST!**” Rusty added.

“Um, what **exactly** does this mission entail?” I asked with a **squeak**.



“Find **Lunar**, retrieve Duchess Catherine Rodenton’s seventy-three-carat **diamond** necklace, and return it to New Mouse City’s Mouseum.”

“**W-w-what?**” I asked.

“B-but I can’t do all that! It’s **impossible!** I have to **drive** in the mayor’s ceremony **tomorrow!**”

“**WELL, THEN WE WILL HAVE TO FINISH THIS MISSION IN ONE NIGHT,**” Solar said calmly.

Professor von Volt handed me a pair of **GOLDEN MIRRORED** glasses.

“When you wear these, you and Sol will be able to **COMMUNICATE** more easily,” he told me.

I opened Sol’s door and climbed in.

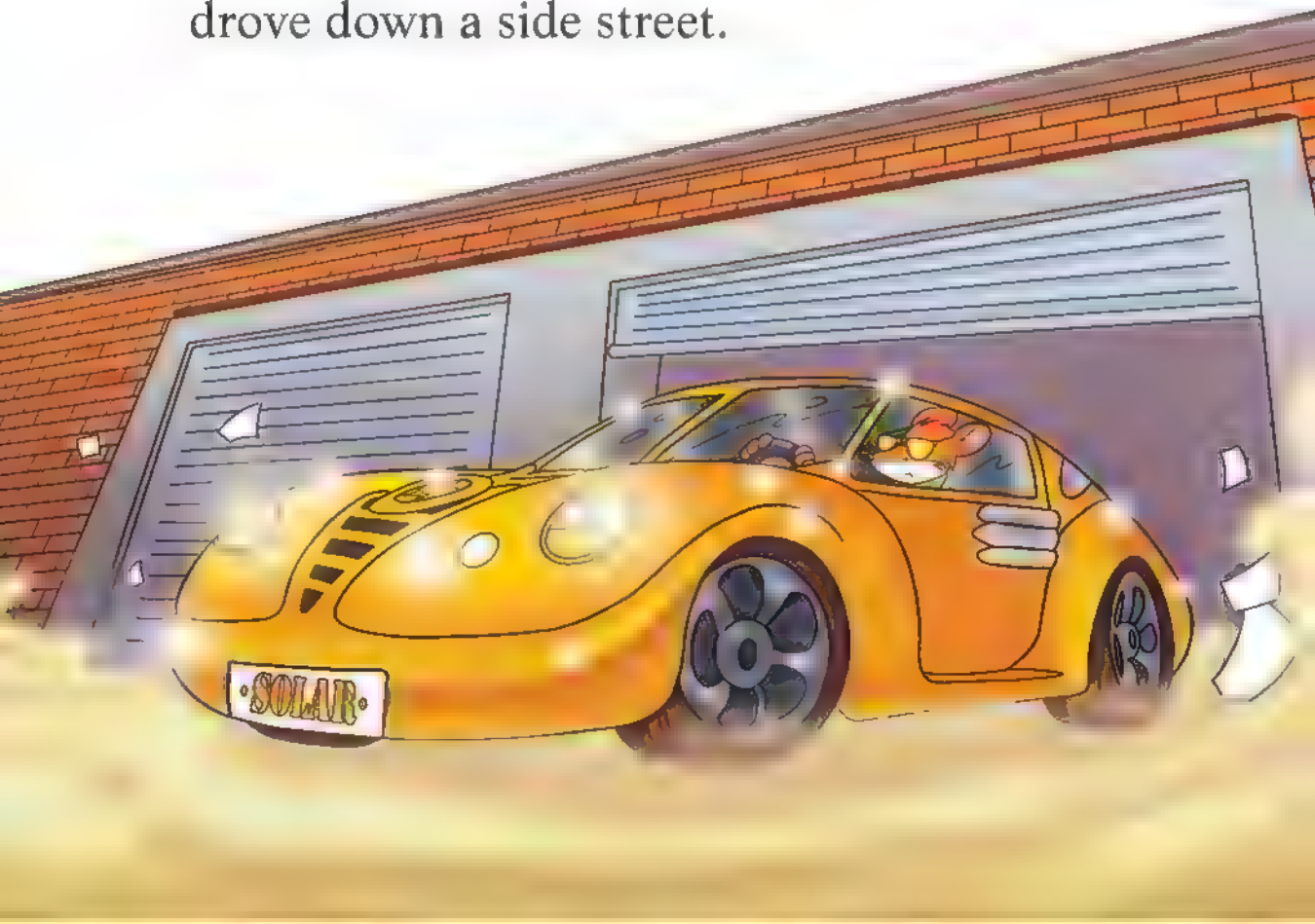
“Good luck, **Stilton!**” Rusty said. “Do



your best on the **DRIVING TEST!**
Don't make me look bad!"

I put on the **COLDER** glasses and was instantly connected directly with Sol's circuits. It was as if our brains were one! **Incredible!**

The elevator took us **up, up, up,** and we found ourselves on the street. I checked to make sure no one had seen us, and then I drove down a side street.





“THANK YOU FOR SAYING YOU WOULD DEFEND ME WITH YOUR LIFE,” Solar said. *“I WOULD DO THE SAME FOR YOU.”*

“Thank you,” I replied, moved by the gesture.

“YOU ARE WELCOME,” Solar said. *“NOW, LET US GET DOWN TO BUSINESS. IT IS THE PERFECT NIGHT TO LOOK FOR LUNAR. LUNAR IS MORE ACTIVE AT NIGHT BECAUSE IT USES MOONBEAMS TO RECHARGE.”*

Sol connected its computer to a **satellite** orbiting New Mouse City. Photos taken by the satellite appeared **INSTANTLY** on the computer’s screen. Solar began scanning one photo after another at an **INCREDIBLE** speed until one of the photos showed a silver **SILHOUETTE**.

It was **Lunar**! And it was at New Mouse



City's port. I drove **Sol** toward the docks, all the while being very careful to **SIGNAL** according to the rules of the road. (After all, I was taking a **TEST**!)

Solar and I searched along the deserted piers all **NIGHT**. As **dawn** approached, we headed toward the **BEACH**. Suddenly, Sol came to a dead stop in front of what looked like the **TRACKS** of a car that had suddenly applied its **brakes**.



“**LOOK!**” Sol told me. “**THOSE TRACKS BELONG TO LUNAR!**”

I got out and looked around, confused. The **TRACKS** didn’t seem to lead anywhere.

“Huh?” I asked. “Where did Lunar go?”

Sol activated its built-in **echo sounder** and began probing the bottom of the **sea**.

“**I FOUND IT!**” Sol said. “**LUNAR IS ON THE OCEAN FLOOR!**”

I saw a **LIGHT** at the bottom of the sea, and the water began to **bubble**.

Suddenly, Lunar rose to the surface like an enormous **silvery** fish!





CARLOTTA CARR

The **silvery** car sat on the sand, **DRIPPING** with water. The driver's door opened, and a tall, thin rodent emerged.

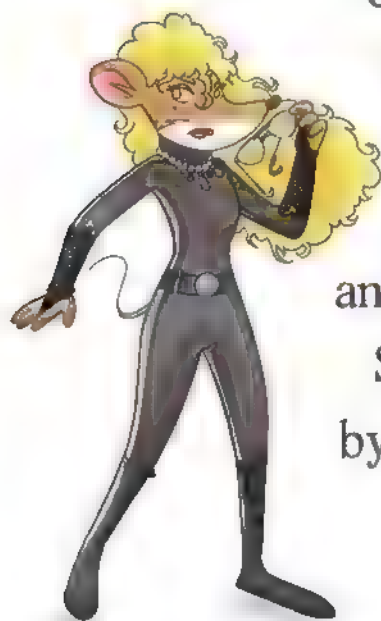
It was **CARLOTTA CARR!**

She had **long, blonde** fur and she was wearing a black outfit. She wore a necklace dripping with **diamonds** the size of **PLUMS**. It was Duchess Rodenton's **STOLEN** heirloom!

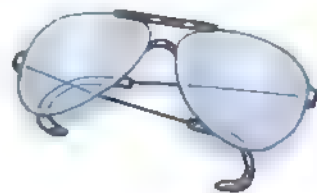
Carlotta Carr removed her silver mirrored sunglasses, and I saw her **icy, ruthless** eyes.

Suddenly, Rusty was standing by my side.

"First of all, **CONGRATS!**" he whispered in my ear. "You



PASSED the test!”



Then he handed me my **DRIVER'S LICENSE**. I had done it! My license was valid **AGAIN**! But I couldn't thank Rusty — Carlotta was stepping forward.

“Rusty, you finally found me,” Carlotta **HISSED** maliciously. Then she cackled. “You and Solar were **very, very** slow!”

Rusty's eyes filled with **tears**.

“Oh, Carlotta, how you've changed!” he said **sadly**. “Your **heart** is so **cold**. Your ambition has **corrupted** you!”

Carlotta **laughed** at her brother.

“And you've stayed **exactly** the same, Rusty,” she sneered. “You're still a **fool**.”

She touched the **DIAMOND** necklace around her neck.

“Thanks to Lunar, look what I've got!” she

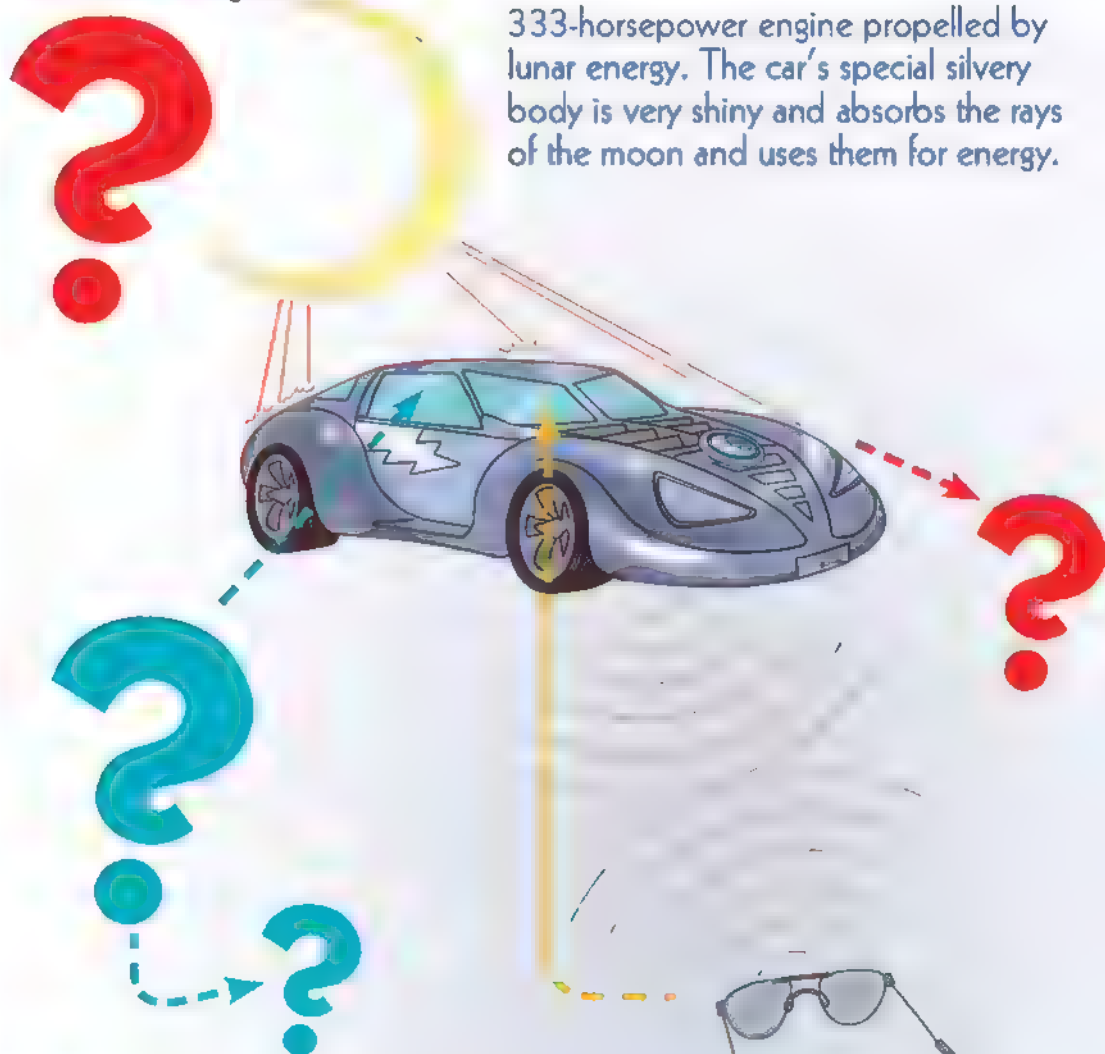


LUNAR: THE RIVAL

Lunar is Solar's auto twin, but it lacks something very precious: a code of ethics!

Carlotta Carr, an extremely bright electrical engineer, built Lunar. She used all of Solar's construction plans except for the code of ethics. That means Lunar does not understand rules and honesty. Carlotta wants to be the cleverest thief on Mouse Island, and she is willing to do anything to achieve her goal!

333-horsepower engine propelled by lunar energy. The car's special silvery body is very shiny and absorbs the rays of the moon and uses them for energy.



Lunar's onboard computer is connected to the driver through a pair of special silver mirrored sunglasses



Lunar cannot instantly disappear because Carlotta couldn't re-create the electromagnetic screen that makes Solar invisible. The sheet with all the instructions was lost forever!



Lunar's massive silver medallion is shaped like the moon and measures the distance to all possible obstacles.



All of Lunar's metal parts are made of solid silver!

But are all of Lunar's accessories and gadgets the same as Solar's? No one but Carlotta knows the answer to that question!

said. "And this is just the ~~beginning~~ ! I have lots of plans for the **FUTURE.**"

"Give me the **necklace!**" Rusty ordered. But Carlotta just laughed.

"I have no intention of doing that," she said. "But I will agree to a **duel** between these cars. If Solar wins, you **take** the ~~necklace~~. And if I win, I take Solar."

Rusty and I were about to refuse when Solar spoke.

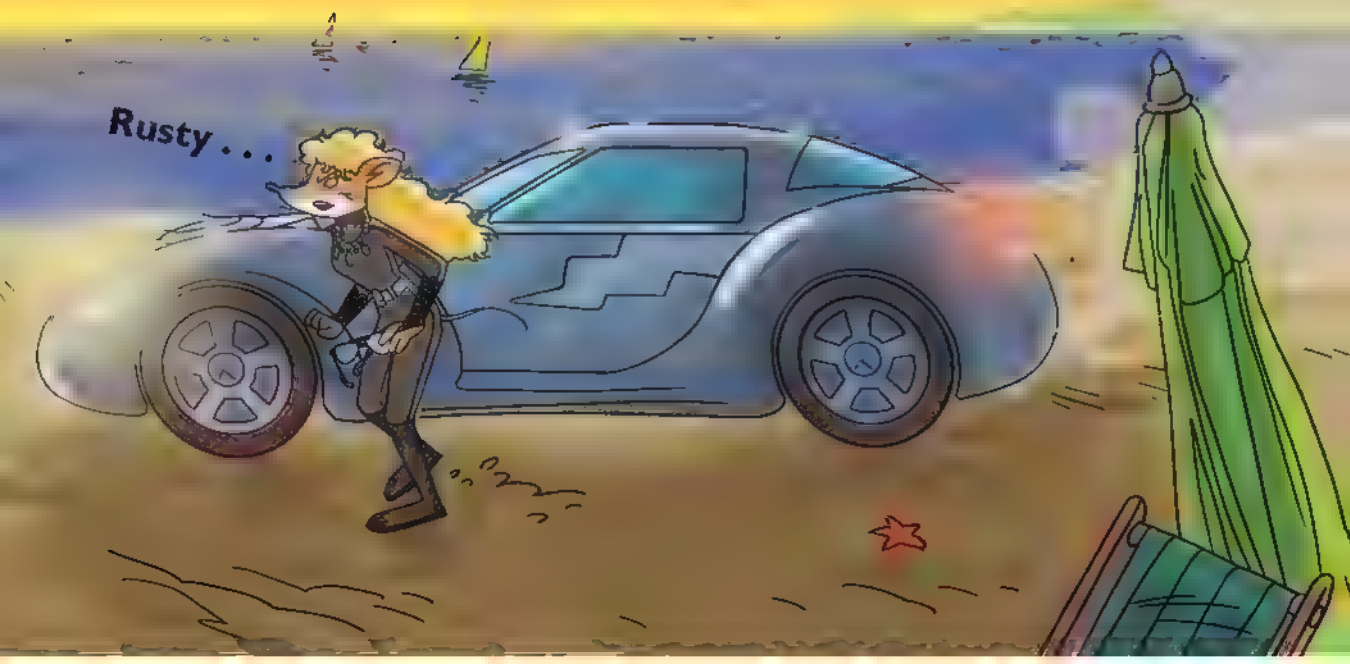


WITHOUT THE CHALLENGE

The two vehicles turned to face each other, and the duel began.

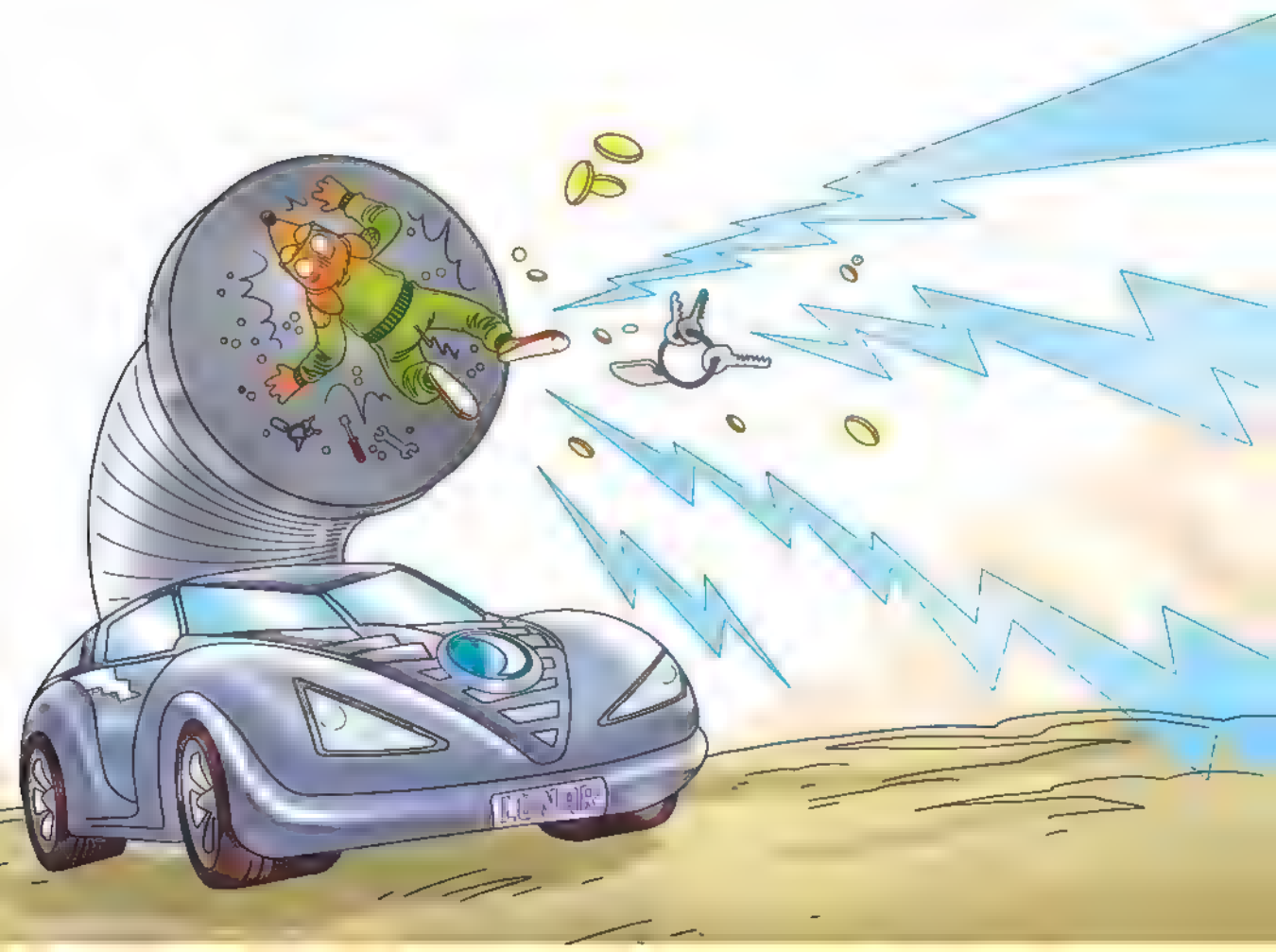
First the two cars tried to **melt** the other's circuits with huge electrical charges. But both of their **components** were shielded and impossible to **break through**.

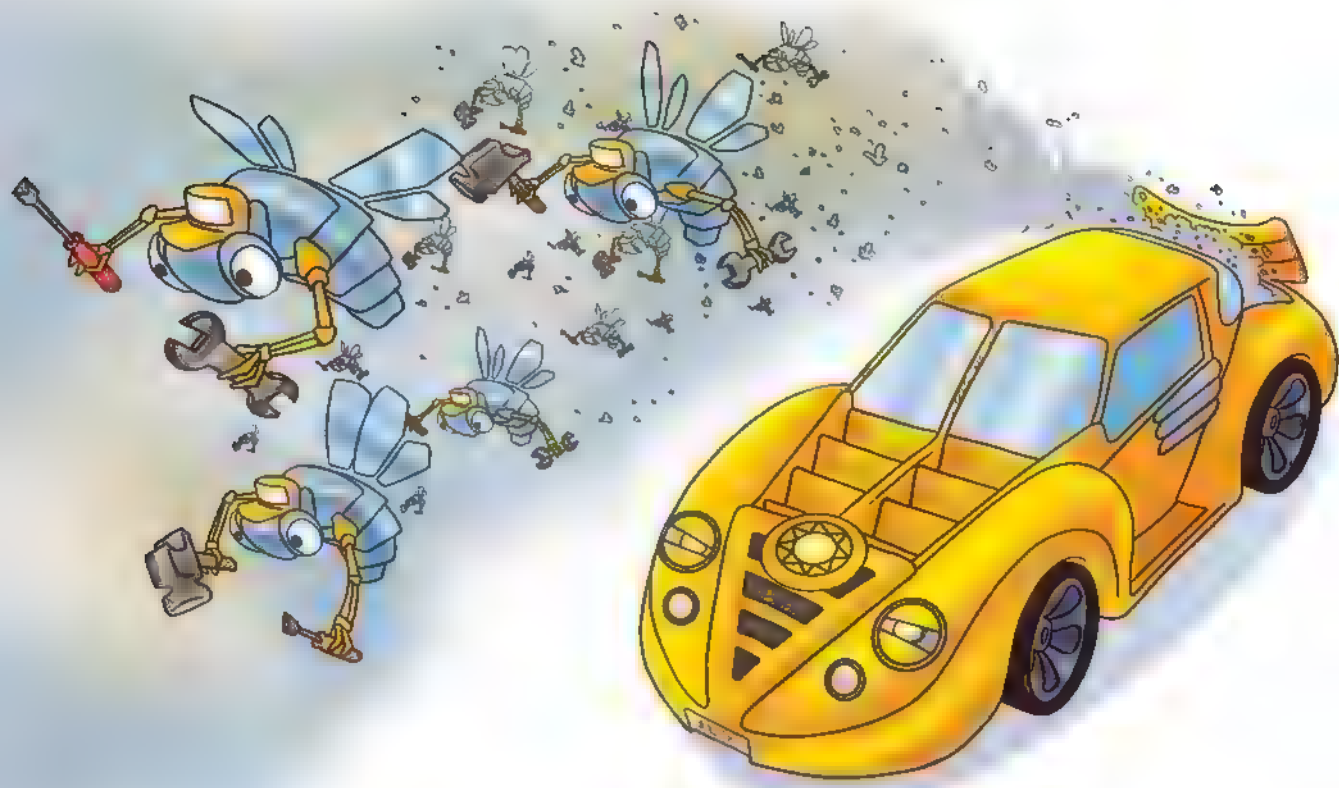
Then Lunar activated a very powerful **magnet**. The magnet **attracted** all metal objects in the area to Lunar's body.



The keys and coins I had in my pocket **flew** toward the silver car's **magnet**. Even my *belt buckle* was drawn to the magnet. *Squeak!*

But Solar came to my **RESCUE**. It activated an **ANTIMAGNETIC** device and unleashed its *secret* weapon: a cloud of robot mosquitoes that attacked Lunar!





Carlotta took one look at the robot mosquitoes and **gave up**.

“Enough!” she snarled **nastily**. “You **WON!** But this is not the end.”

She **ripped** the diamond necklace off her neck and threw it in the **water**.

“If you want the necklace, go get it!” she **shrieked**. “But you’ll never have me!”

She jumped inside Lunar, **revved**

up the engine, and drove off in a cloud of **SMOKE**.

I was **torn**. Should I go after Carlotta or try to **save** the necklace?

“Quick! Let’s get the **necklace**!” I said.

Sol **DOVE** into the water. A long arm holding a **net** extended from the passenger-side door and scooped up the necklace before the sea could **swallow** it.

When Sol emerged from the water, I realized that the **SUN** was high on the **HORIZON**. I checked the time.

“**Crusty cat litter!**” I squeaked **hysterically**. “I’m going to be late for the mayor’s ceremony! I have to be at City Hall in fifteen minutes!”





AN EXTREMELY DIFFICULT COURSE

Solar figured out the shortest route to City Hall, and Rusty got in the driver's seat. He maneuvered so well in **TRAFFIC** that we arrived right as the clock struck eight thirty. Solar parked down the block and waited for my *signal*.

The mayor was already at the podium, about to begin the **CEREMONY**, and I saw my grandfather William Shortpaws and my entire **FAMILY** nearby. The crowd was also full of reporters and TV news crews for all the *national* and *international* stations.

“And now, Mr. Geronimo Stilton will give us a **DEMONSTRATION** on how to drive safely!” the mayor announced. “Which car

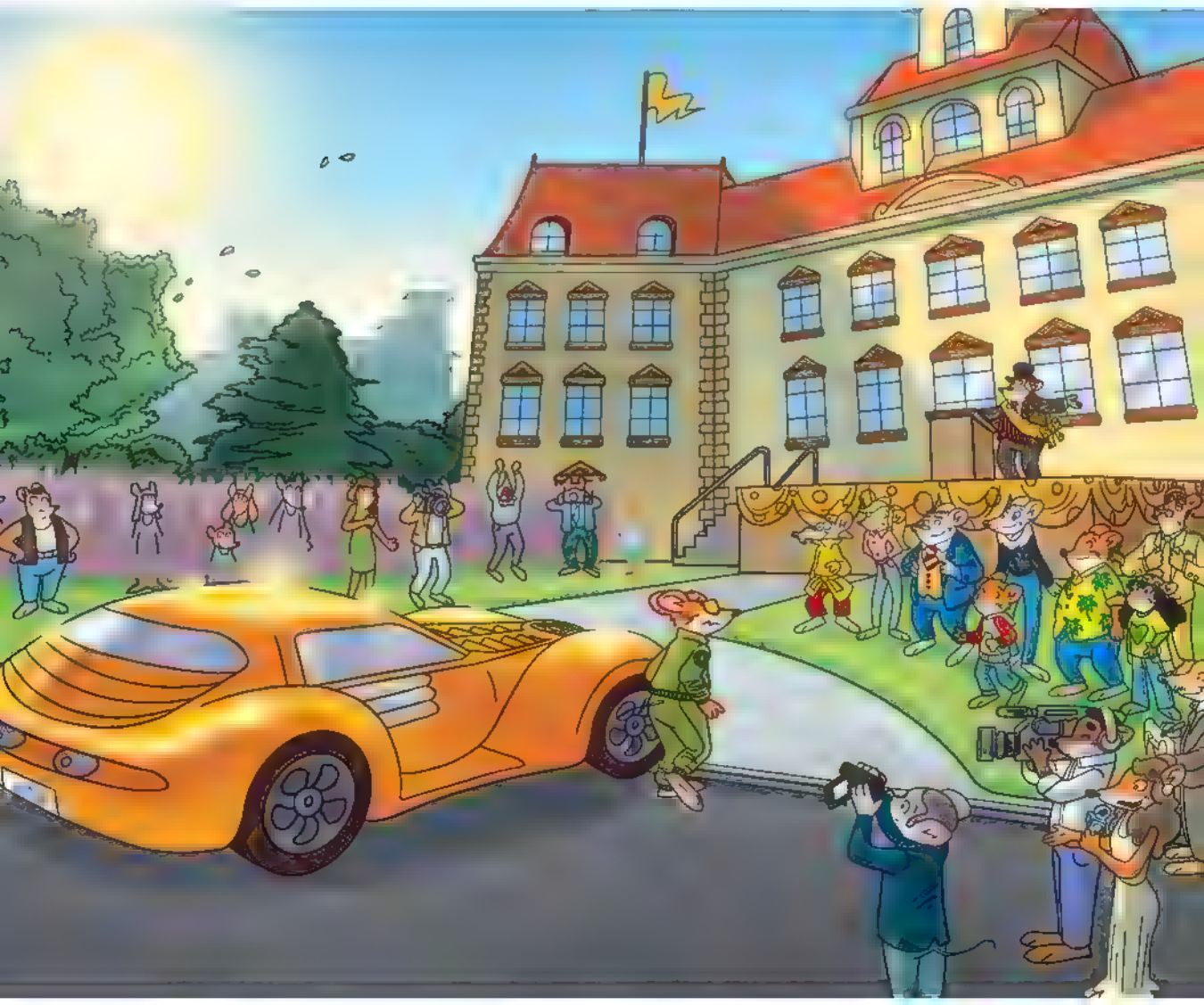


will you use for the **DEMONSTRATION**?”

I snapped my fingers, and Solar appeared.

“**OOOOOOOH!**” the crowd shouted.

When Sol pulled up, the photographers began **SNAPPING** one photo after another, and the reporters fired all sorts of questions at me.





“Mr. Stilton, how does it **feel** to drive this type of car?”

“Who designed it?”

“It’s a great honor to drive **Solar!**” I replied with a smile. “As far as who designed it, I’m sorry but I can’t tell you that. It’s a **SECRET!**” I climbed into the car and turned on the **ignition**.

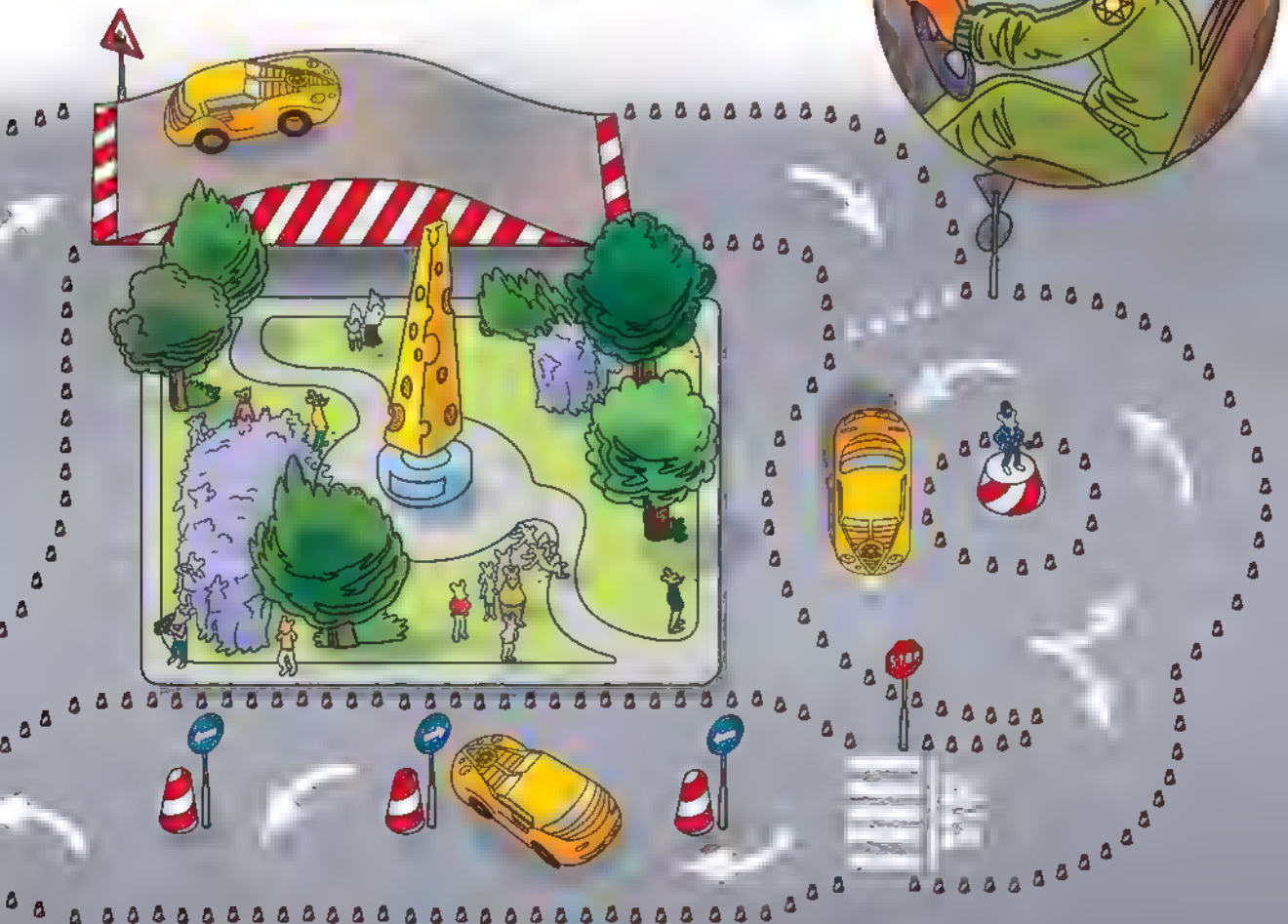
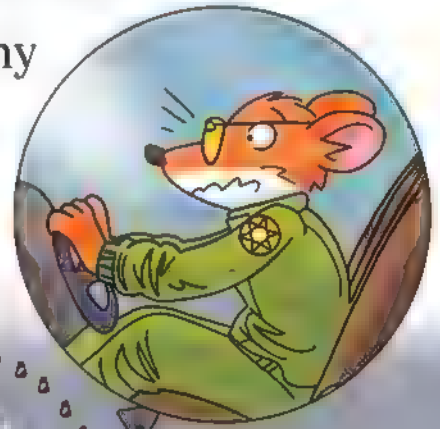
“Are you ready, Sol?” I whispered.



Sol revved its engine in reply.

"I WILL NOT HELP YOU WITH THE DEMONSTRATION," Sol said. "YOU HAVE TO DO IT ALL BY YOURSELF!"

It was an **extremely difficult** obstacle course. Sol was **perfectly silent** the entire time. It didn't give me any tips, it didn't **DRIVE** for me, and it didn't help me through





any of the more **DIFFICULT** parts. My whiskers **trembled** the entire time!

To stay calm, I reminded myself that, thanks to my friend **Rusty Carr**, I had my license again. I could do this! I just had to stay **calm** and **relaxed**! I concentrated on all I had **LEARNED** in the last week.

When I got to the end of the **course**, I got out of the car.

“H-how did I do?” I asked Sol.

“**YOU WERE PERFECT**,” Sol said.

“Congratulations!” the mayor agreed. “You didn’t make a **SINGLE** mistake!”

He asked me to join him onstage, where he shook my paw. I saw Rusty in the **crowd**, and I called him onto the stage as well.

“Thank you, dear **friend**,” I said. “Without your **driving lessons**, I never could have done it!”



Rusty was **PLEASED** with the compliment, but he was also very **modest**.

“It was all your doing, Geronimo,” Rusty said to me. “Your driving was **SUPERB!**”

Then he turned to address the crowd.

“I am happy to announce that *Geronimo Stilton* and this amazing car have recovered Duchess Catherine Rodenton’s **diamond** necklace!”





YOU HELPED ME, NOW I'LL HELP YOU!

The photographers began snapping one photo after another while Rusty and I gave the stolen *necklace* to the mayor to return to the duchess.

Then suddenly, Rusty rushed off the stage.

"Sorry, I have to run!" he *squeaked*





anxiously. “I have to finish **PAINTING** the driving school headquarters. All the work has to be done **today!**”

“Well, I’m coming with **you!**” I told him with a **SMILE**. “You helped me, and now I’ll help you. In fact, I’ll ask my entire **family** to help as well!”

I got my sister, Thea, my cousin Trap, my nephew Benjamin, and a lot of other **FRIENDS**, including Bruce Hyena, Petunia





Pretty Paws, Buggy Wugsy, Wild Willie, and Hercule Poirat to **HELP** out. **Rusty's** relatives pitched in, too: Professor von Volt, Dewey von Volt, Margo Bitmouse, and Rob-8 were **all** there!

We all worked together **HAPPILY**, and the following day, the freshly painted headquarters of **The Very Best Driving School in New Mouse City** looked perfect!

And so, my rodent friends, that is the end of my latest **ADVENTURE**.

Oh, and I almost forgot: Whether you travel by **FOOT**, on a **bicycle**, or in a **car**, always **RESPECT** the rules of the road.

See you next time, and until then, **stay safe** on your city's streets!

GERONIMO'S 10 RULES OF THE ROAD



1. Obey all traffic signs.
2. Always cross the street in the crosswalk.
3. Always wait for a walk signal before you cross the street.
4. Always look to the right and to the left before you cross the street.
5. Always walk on the sidewalk.
6. If there is no sidewalk, walk close to the curb on the left hand side of the road facing oncoming traffic.
7. When riding a bike, always wear a helmet.
8. When riding a bike, keep to the right and don't ride on the sidewalk.
9. Take care of your bicycle. Your brakes, tires, chain, lights, and bell must be in good working condition.
10. Be sure to buckle your seat belt when riding in a car (or in any moving vehicle).

Stay safe!



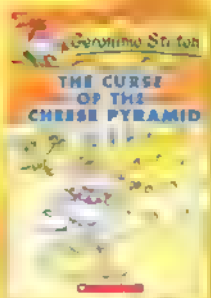
See you
next time!



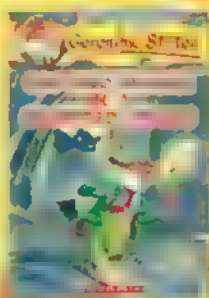
**Be sure to read all my
fabumouse adventures!**



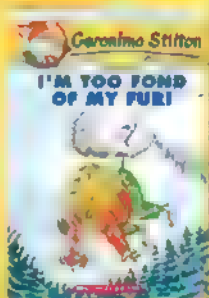
#1 Lost Treasure of the Emerald Eye



#2 The Curse of the Cheese Pyramid



#3 Cat and Mouse in a Haunted House



#4 I'm Too Fond of My Fur!



#5 Four Mike Deep in the Jungle



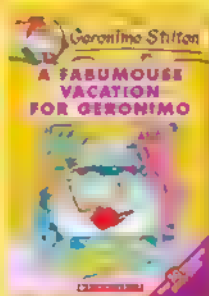
#6 Paws Off, Cheddarface!



#7 Red Pizzas for a Blue Count



#8 Attack of the Bandit Cats



#9 A Fabumouse Vacation for Geronimo



#10 All Because of a Cup of Coffee



#11 It's Halloween, You 'Fraidy Mouse!



#12 Merry Christmas, Geronimo!



#13 The Phantom of the Subway



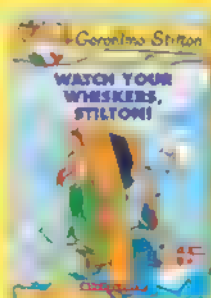
#14 The Temple of the Ruby of Fire



#15 The Mona Mousa Code



#16 A Cheese-Colored Camper



#17 Watch Your Whiskers, Stilton!



#18 Shipwreck on the Pirate Islands



#19 My Name Is Stilton, Geronimo Stilton



#20 Surf's Up, Geronimo!



#21 The Wild, Wild West



#22 The Secret of Cacklefur Castle



A Christmas Tale



#23 Valentine's Day Disaster



#24 Field Trip to Niagara Falls



#25 The Search for Sunken Treasure



#26 The Mummy with No Name



#27 The Christmas Toy Factory



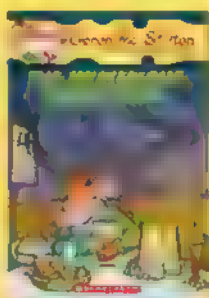
#28 Wedding Crasher



#29 Down and Out Down Under



#30 The Mouse Island Marathon



#31 The Mysterious Cheese Thief



Christmas Catastrophe



#32 Valley of the Giant Skeletons



#33 Geronimo and the Gold Medal Mystery



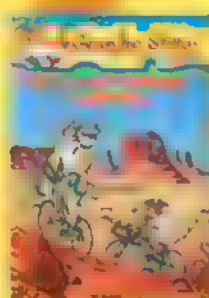
#34 Geronimo Stilton, Secret Agent



#35 A Very Merry Christmas



#36 Geronimo's Valentine



#37 The Race Across America



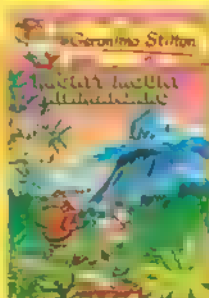
#38 A Fabumouse School Adventure



#39 Singing Sensation



#40 The Karate Mouse



#41 Mighty Mount Kilimanjaro



#42 The Peculiar Pumpkin Thief



#43 I'm Not a Supermouse!



#44 The Giant Diamond Robbery



#45 Save the White Whale!



#46 The Haunted Castle



#47 Run for the Hills, Geronimo!



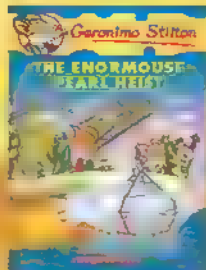
#48 The Mystery in Venice



#49 The Way of the Samurai



#50 This Hotel Is Haunted



#51 The Enormouse Pearl Heist



#52 Mouse in Space!



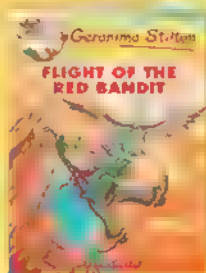
#53 Rumble in the Jungle



#54 Get into Gear, Stilton!



#55 The Golden Statue Plot



#56 Flight of the Red Bandit



The Hunt for the Golden Book



#57 The Stinky Cheese Vacation



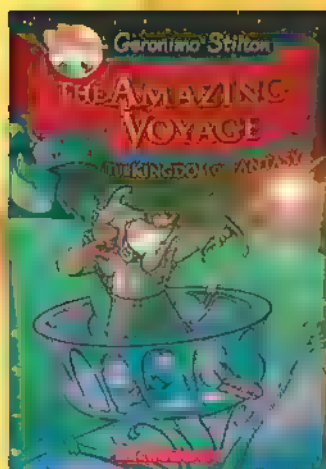
Be sure
to read all
my adventures
in the Kingdom
of Fantasy!



**THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY**



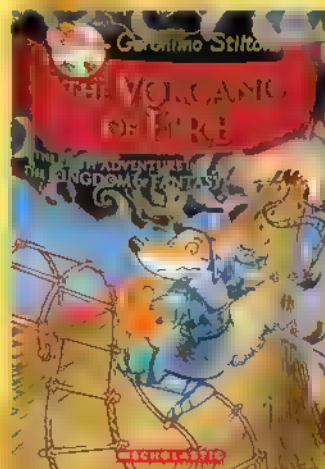
**THE QUEST FOR
PARADISE:
THE RETURN TO THE
KINGDOM OF FANTASY**



**THE AMAZING
VOYAGE:
THE THIRD ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY**



**THE DRAGON
PROPHECY:
THE FOURTH ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY**



**THE VOLCANO
OF FIRE:
THE FIFTH ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY**



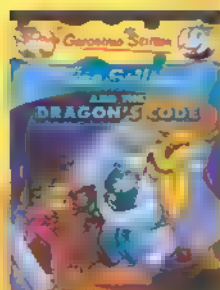
Join me and my friends on
a journey through time in
this very special edition!



THE JOURNEY
THROUGH TIME



**Don't miss
these exciting
Thea Sisters
adventures!**



**Thea Stilton and the
Dragon's Code**



**Thea Stilton and the
Mountain of Fire**



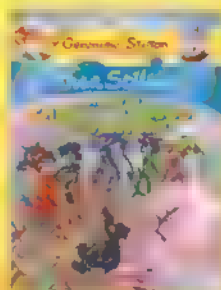
**Thea Stilton and the
Ghost of the Shipwreck**



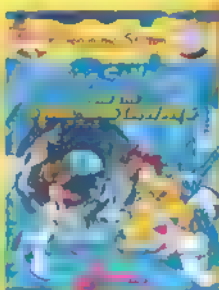
**Thea Stilton and the
Secret City**



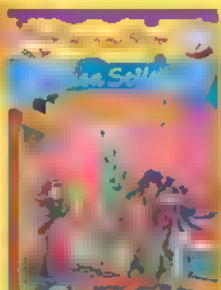
**Thea Stilton and the
Mystery in Paris**



**Thea Stilton and the
Cherry Blossom Adventure**



**Thea Stilton and the
Star Castaways**



**Thea Stilton: Big Trouble
in the Big Apple**



**Thea Stilton and the
Ice Treasure**



**Thea Stilton and the
Secret of the Old Castle**



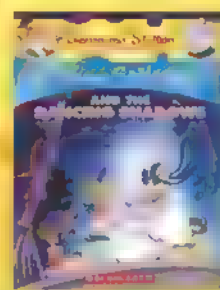
**Thea Stilton and the
Blue Scarab Hunt**



**Thea Stilton and the
Prince's Emerald**



**Thea Stilton and the Mystery
on the Orient Express**



**Thea Stilton and the
Dancing Shadows**



**Thea Stilton and the
Legend of the Fire
Flowers**



**Thea Stilton and the
Spanish Dance Mission**



**Thea Stilton and the
Journey to the Lion's Den**



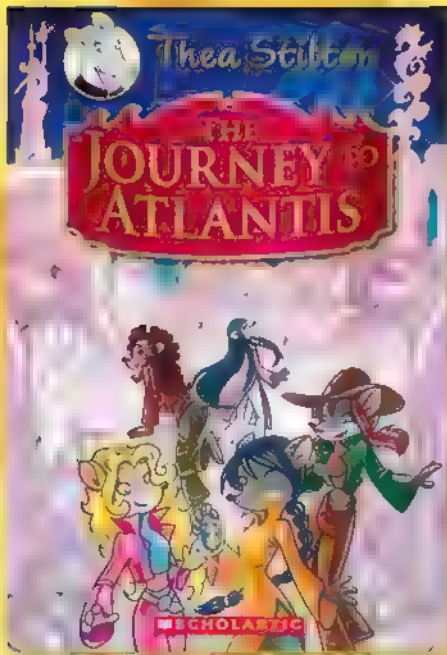
**Thea Stilton and the
Great Tulip Heist**



**Thea Stilton and the
Chocolate Sabotage**



Check out
these very
special editions
featuring me
and the Thea
Sisters!



THE JOURNEY
TO ATLANTIS



THE SECRET OF
THE FAIRIES

MEET GERONIMO STILTONIX



He is a spacemouse — the Geronimo Stilton of a parallel universe! He is captain of the spaceship MouseStar 1. While flying through the cosmos, he visits distant planets and meets crazy aliens. His adventures are out of this world!



#1 Alien Escape

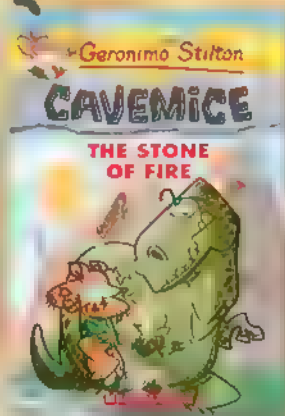


#2 You're Mine, Captain!



Meet **GERONIMO STILTONOOT**

He is a cavemouse — Geronimo Stilton's ancient ancestor! He runs the stone newspaper in the prehistoric village of Old Mouse City. From dealing with dinosaurs to dodging meteorites, his life in the Stone Age is full of adventure!



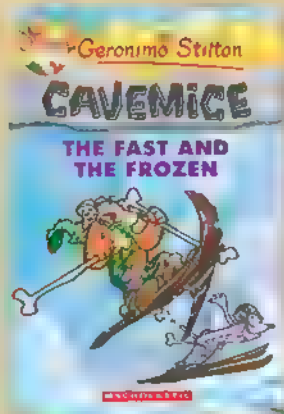
#1 The Stone of Fire



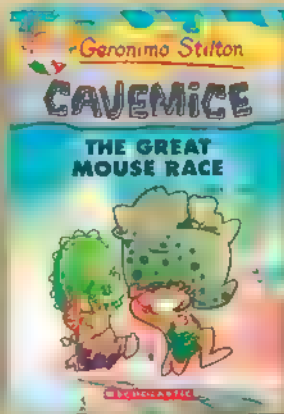
#2 Watch Your Tail!



#3 Help, I'm in Hot Lava!



#4 The Fast and the Frozen



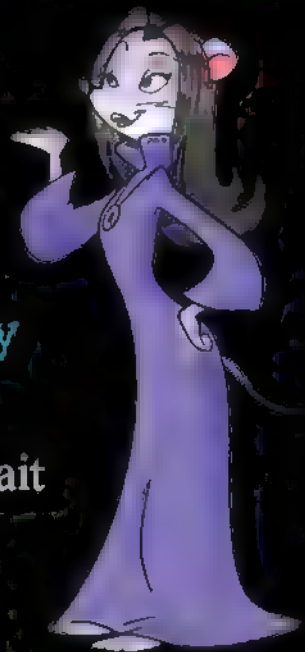
#5 The Great Mouse Race



Meet

CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR

I, *Geronimo Stilton*, have a lot of mouse friends, but none as **spooky** as my friend **CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR**! She is an enchanting and **MYSTERIOUS** mouse with a pet bat named **Bitewing**. **YIKES!** I'm a real 'fraidy mouse, but even I think **CREEPELLA** and her family are **AWFULLY** fascinating. I can't wait for you to read all about **CREEPELLA** in these **fa-mouse-ly funny** and **spectacularly spooky** tales!



#1 The Thirteen Ghosts



#2 Meet Me in Horrorwood



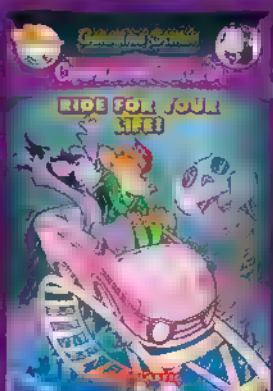
#3 Ghost Pirate Treasure



#4 Return of the Vampire

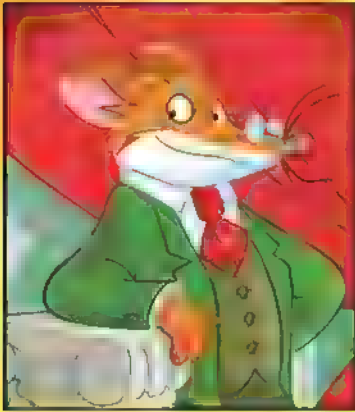


#5 Fright Night



#6 Ride for Your Life

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Born in New Mouse City, Mouse Island, **GERONIMO STILTON** is Rattus Emeritus of Mousomorphic Literature and of Neo-Ratonic Comparative Philosophy. For the past twenty years, he has been running *The Rodent's Gazette*, New Mouse City's most widely read daily newspaper.

Stilton was awarded the Ratitzer Prize for his scoops on *The Curse of the Cheese Pyramid* and *The Search for Sunken Treasure*. He has also received the Andersen 2000 Prize for Personality of the Year. One of his bestsellers won the 2002 eBook Award for world's best ratlings' electronic book. His works have been published all over the globe.

In his spare time, Mr. Stilton collects antique cheese rinds and plays golf. But what he most enjoys is telling stories to his nephew Benjamin.



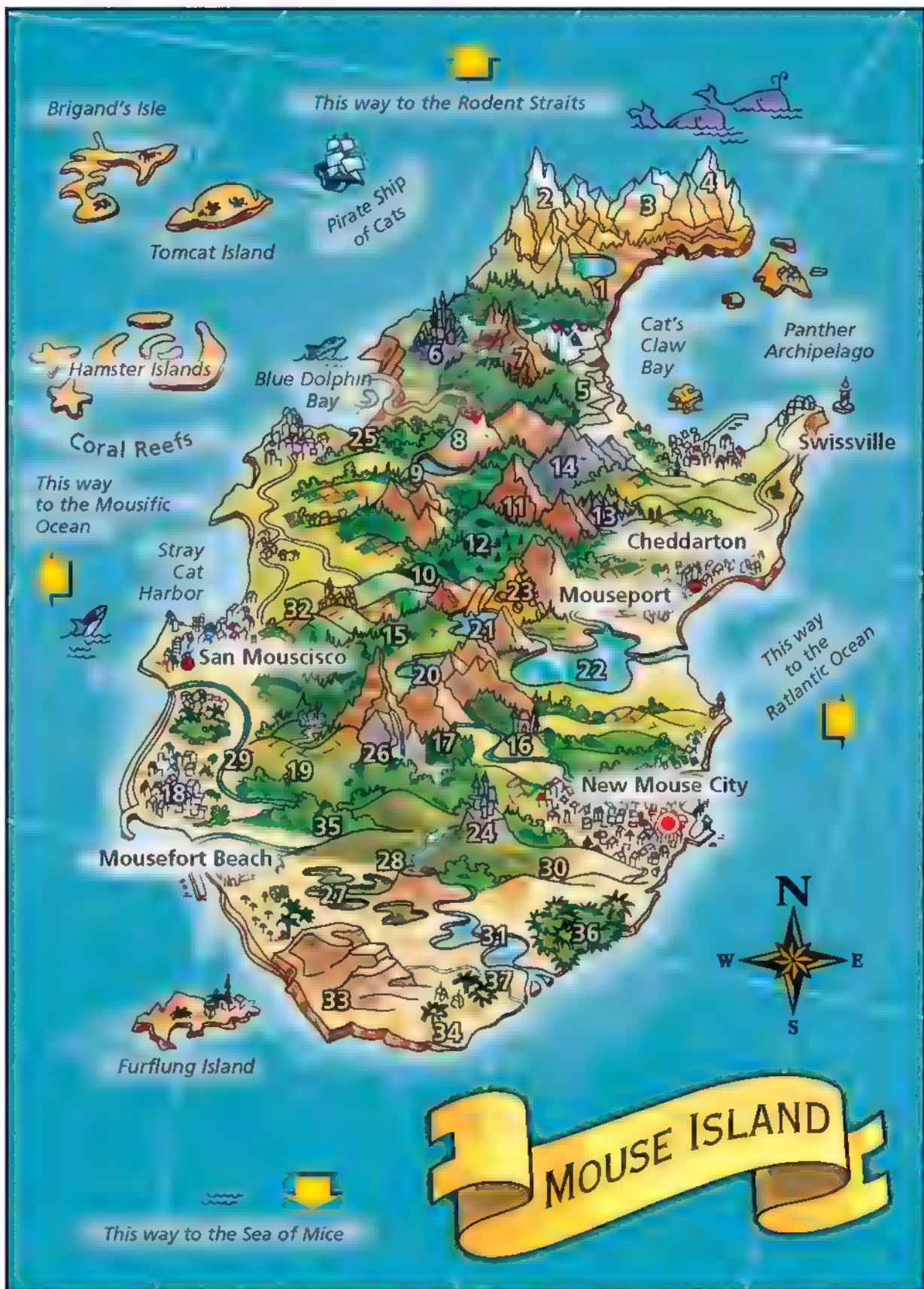
1. Main entrance
2. Printing presses (where the books and newspaper are printed)
3. Accounts department
4. Editorial room (where the editors, illustrators, and designers work)
5. Geronimo Stilton's office
6. Helicopter landing pad

*THE RODENT'S
GAZETTE*



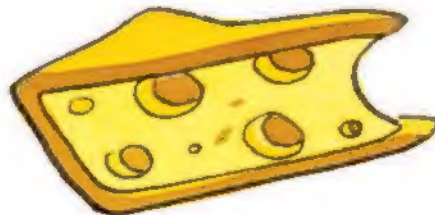
Map of New Mouse City

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Industrial Zone | 24. <i>The Daily Rat</i> |
| 2. Cheese Factories | 25. <i>The Rodent's Gazette</i> |
| 3. Angorat International Airport | 26. Trap's House |
| 4. WRAT Radio and Television Station | 27. Fashion District |
| 5. Cheese Market | 28. The Mouse House Restaurant |
| 6. Fish Market | 29. Environmental Protection Center |
| 7. Town Hall | 30. Harbor Office |
| 8. Snotnose Castle | 31. Mousidon Square Garden |
| 9. The Seven Hills of Mouse Island | 32. Golf Course |
| 10. Mouse Central Station | 33. Swimming Pool |
| 11. Trade Center | 34. Tennis Courts |
| 12. Movie Theater | 35. Curlyfur Island Amusement Park |
| 13. Gym | 36. Geronimo's House |
| 14. Catnegie Hall | 37. Historic District |
| 15. Singing Stone Plaza | 38. Public Library |
| 16. The Gouda Theater | 39. Shipyard |
| 17. Grand Hotel | 40. Thea's House |
| 18. Mouse General Hospital | 41. New Mouse Harbor |
| 19. Botanical Gardens | 42. Luna Lighthouse |
| 20. Cheap Junk for Less (Trap's store) | 43. The Statue of Liberty |
| 21. Aunt Sweetfur and Benjamin's House | 44. Hercule Poirat's Office |
| 22. Mouseum of Modern Art | 45. Petunia Pretty Paws's House |
| 23. University and Library | 46. Grandfather William's House |



Map of Mouse Island

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Big Ice Lake | 21. Lake Lakelake |
| 2. Frozen Fur Peak | 22. Lake Lakelakelake |
| 3. Slipperyslopes Glacier | 23. Cheddar Crag |
| 4. Coldcreeps Peak | 24. Cannycat Castle |
| 5. Ratzikistan | 25. Valley of the Giant Sequoia |
| 6. Transratania | 26. Cheddar Springs |
| 7. Mount Vamp | 27. Sulfurous Swamp |
| 8. Roastedrat Volcano | 28. Old Reliable Geyser |
| 9. Brimstone Lake | 29. Vole Vale |
| 10. Poopedcat Pass | 30. Ravingrat Ravine |
| 11. Stinko Peak | 31. Gnat Marshes |
| 12. Dark Forest | 32. Munster Highlands |
| 13. Vain Vampires Valley | 33. Mousehara Desert |
| 14. Goose Bumps Gorge | 34. Oasis of the Sweaty Camel |
| 15. The Shadow Line Pass | 35. Cabbagehead Hill |
| 16. Penny Pincher Castle | 36. Rattytrap Jungle |
| 17. Nature Reserve Park | 37. Rio Mosquito |
| 18. Las Ratayas Marinas | |
| 19. Fossil Forest | |
| 20. Lake Lake | |



Dear mouse friends,
Thanks for reading, and farewell
till the next book.
It'll be another whisker-licking-good
adventure, and that's a promise!



Geronimo Stilton



GERONIMO STILTON



THEA



TRAP



BENJAMIN

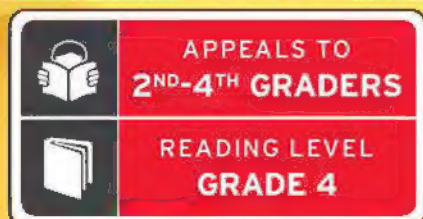
Who is Geronimo Stilton?

That's me! I run a newspaper, but my true passion is writing adventure stories. Here in New Mouse City, the capital of Mouse Island, my books are all bestsellers! My stories are funny, fa-mouse-ly funny. They are whisker-licking-good tales, and that's a promise!

GET INTO GEAR, STILTON!

I was selected by the mayor to give a special driving demonstration, but my driver's license had expired! I had only a week to relearn everything to pass the test for a new one. Little did I know that my lessons would introduce me to a talking robot car! It was up to us to stop a thief and make the roads safer for everyone.

 **SCHOLASTIC**



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